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Wangunk Ethnohistory: A Case Study of a Connecticut River Indian Community

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WANGUNK ETHNOHISTORY:
A CASE STUDY OF A CONNECTICUT RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

Timothy Howlett Ives

2001

APPROVAL SHEET

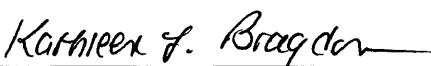
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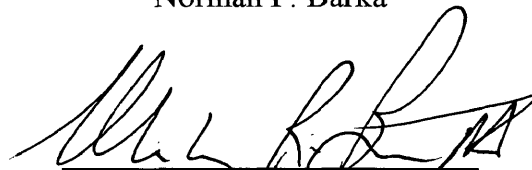
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER 1—GENERAL INTRODUCTION	2
CHAPTER 2—TRADE, WARFARE, AND COLONIZATION, CA. 1600-1645	10
2.1 The Sequins and the Fur Trade	10
2.2 The Smallpox Pandemic and English Colonization	15
2.3 Early Troubles at Wethersfield	17
2.4 War and Fear in the Connecticut Colony	19
CHAPTER 3—COLONIAL EXPANSION AND EROSION OF LOCAL NATIVE POWER, CA. 1645-1676	23
3.0 Introduction	23
3.1 Wethersfield Grows and Middletown is Established	23
3.2 The Political Strength of the River Indians Dissolves	25
3.3 Middletown's Indian Reservations are Created	28
3.4 King Phillip's War, ca. 1675-1676	31
CHAPTER 4—NATIVE SOCIAL NETWORKING IN CENTRAL CONNECTICUT, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	37
CHAPTER 5—THE WANGUNKS AND THEIR NEIGHBORS, CA. 1680-1750	43
5.0 Introduction	43
5.1 Aspects of Wangunk Reservation Life	43
5.2 A Colonial Village is Founded	50
5.3 The Wangunks Under English Colonial Rule	51
5.4 The Wangunks and Land Ownership	54
5.5 Missionary Efforts in Central Connecticut	60

5.6 The Wangunk Community Diaspora	63
5.7 A Growing Village Covets Wangunk Land	66
CHAPTER 6—DISSOLUTION OF THE WANGUNK RESERVATION, CA. 1750-1785	69
6.0 Introduction	69
6.1 Negotiations with Cushoy	70
6.2 Negotiations with Richard Ranney	72
6.3 Christian Indians and the Brotherton Movement	74
6.4 Group Land Claims Reveal a People in Motion	76
6.5 The Wangunks as a Dispersed People	81
CHAPTER 7—WANGUNK IN A REGIONAL SOCIAL CONTEXT	85
7.0 Introduction	85
7.1 Intraregional Social Context	86
7.2 The Shared Social Experience in Central Connecticut	95
7.3 Extraregional Social Connections	97
7.4 Social Networking: Results and Conclusions	101
APPENDIX A	107
Deed confirming the sale of Middletown	107
APPENDIX B	109
A deed of Middletown	109
APPENDIX C	110
Deed of Wangunk reservation	110
APPENDIX D	111
“Mr. Treat's Statement, 1737”	111
APPENDIX E	114
European settlements in Connecticut, ca. 1636	114

APPENDIX F	115
Communities of the Central Connecticut social region in the mid-seventeenth century	115
APPENDIX G	116
Middletown's colonial and Indian settlements, ca. 1700	116
APPENDIX H	117
"Plan of Indian at Wongunk," A survey map by William Welles, 1756	117
APPENDIX I	118
A key to the William Welles survey map	118
APPENDIX J	120
Wangunk Web of Social Interaction, ca. 1670-1780	120
APPENDIX K	121
Biographical Sketches of Wangunk Reservation Proprietors	121

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ABSTRACT

This is an ethnohistory the Wangunk Indian community, which occupied a reservation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in what is now Portland, CT. This historic “River Indian” community is among several in Central Connecticut that have scarcely been studied from an anthropological perspective. This Wangunk ethnohistory is submitted as an empirical case study of a single community and place in this region.

Aside from providing a historical context and basic ethnohistory, this study combines a regional approach with social network theory to reveal two basic truths about the nature of Wangunk as a community. First, the Wangunk community was not a socially bounded entity, but rather, an entity socially interfaced with other communities throughout its known history. Second, although this community largely dispersed toward the end of the reservation period, the Wangunks did not “disappear” as popular history might recall. They reintegrated among other groups, surviving as a Native people. It appears that the Wangunks’ social connections facilitated their reintegration among other Native communities as they adapted to changing social contexts.

**WANGUNK ETHNOHISTORY: A CASE STUDY OF A
CONNECTICUT RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY**

CHAPTER 1—General Introduction

This is an ethnohistory of the Wangunk Indian community. The first matter of importance is to define the word "Wangunk," which has enjoyed a variety of spellings throughout history. This Algonkian word denotes a place where a river bends (Trumbull 1870:29). The Connecticut River takes a marked bend just above Middletown, and that is the Wangunk with which this narrative is concerned. This river bend is flanked by a floodplain which local historic records commonly refer to as "Wangunk Meadow," located in present day Portland, CT. At the southern end of this floodplain was a three hundred-acre Indian reservation occupied by an Indian community during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This reservation was considered to be a part of the locality called Wangunk. Thus, for the purposes of this narrative, the word Wangunk refers to an area in Portland, and/or the Indians who occupied a reservation there.

This narrative is intended to contribute toward a greater knowledge of Central Connecticut's historic Indians. Nineteenth and twentieth century historians have produced summary literature on this topic (Cook 1976; DeForest 1853; Speiss 1933; Trumbull 1886; Twitchell 1907), and some relatively recent history articles have also been published, focusing on specific topics or areas in the region (Cooper 1986; Hermes 1999; Vaughan 1966). However, the culture of these Indians has scarcely been examined from an anthropological perspective. To date, the only anthropologist to produce a body of research pertaining to Central Connecticut's historic Indians is Kenneth Feder, who

focuses on the Farmington Valley. Feder has published ethnohistoric research pertaining to the Tunxis of Farmington (Feder 1980; Feder 1982), in addition to a comprehensive study of the "Lighthouse Tribe," a small historic Indian community in Barkhamstead located in the Western Uplands (Feder 1993; Feder 1994). No detailed ethnohistoric studies have yet been produced pertaining to any of the Indian communities that lived in Central Connecticut's valley. This Wangunk ethnohistory is presented as a first attempt at filling this void. The author has not had the luxury of building upon preexisting templates. For that reason, it seemed necessary to provide a thorough historical context for the Wangunks as a River Indian community, and hopefully this end has been sufficiently achieved.

This is a case study of a River Indian community. Aside from providing a historical context and basic ethnohistory, this study combines a regional approach with social network theory to reveal two basic truths about the nature of Wangunk as a community. First, the Wangunk community was not a socially bounded entity, but rather, an entity socially interfaced with other communities throughout its known history. Second, although this community largely dispersed toward the end of the reservation period, the Wangunks did not "disappear" as popular history might recall. They reintegrated among other groups, surviving as a Native people. It appears that the Wangunks' social connections facilitated their reintegration among other Native communities.

To introduce the author's research approach, he refers to two previous studies that establish a conceptual background. The first is a paper presented by Ann McMullen at a recent archaeological conference. McMullen explains that although the study of "tribes"

has become a part of our scholarly heritage, regional histories and intertribal relationships have largely been neglected (McMullen 2000). This trend has been reinforced by recent politics where proving a tribe's distinctiveness and relative isolation can provide political advantages. In her own research, McMullen portrays Native communities as part of larger social systems by emphasizing regional interaction. These notions can be traced to an earlier paper by Kathleen Bragdon, which presents a regional analysis of social networks in southern New England (Bragdon 1998). Bragdon encourages current research to transcend tribe as a unit of analysis to pursue a regional approach in tribal studies. By examining the complex set of interrelationships between individuals on a large scale, social regions can be defined and addressed as study units which yield patterns in Native identity and social adaptive strategies.

Regional approaches have recently been employed in Connecticut. In one study, ceramic, historical, and linguistic data are combined spatially and temporally define the migration of a prehistoric cultural tradition into Southeastern Connecticut (Lavin 1998). Another study demonstrates that shared patterns in material culture, especially basketry, can provide the basis for a regional interpretation (McMullen 1994). However, the regional approach is not a new concept, as it has been used extensively in other parts of the world. In fact, it has become "a mainstay for examining intersocietal interaction in the prehistoric Southwest" (Douglas 1995:240).

The author's database consists of social linkages extracted from the documentary record which link Wangunk to other groups within, and without, their social region. Social linkages between groups also constitute the databases employed by McMullen (2000) and Bragdon (1998). Like potsherds or other material remains, social linkages

can be collected across space and used to reconstruct a group, or group's, connections within, or without, a region. Social network analysis has become a well established methodology in anthropology, as attested to by the journal *Social Networks* and a recent comprehensive book on the topic (White and Kimball 1989), and is used as a tool in understanding the relationships between individual, community, and region. Many current works in social network analysis rely heavily upon statistics and extensive kinship charts to examination of large amounts of social connections. My study is, by necessity, empirical. This is due to the sporadic and scattered nature of the documentary "trail" from which the database was extracted.

The author's method of analysis involves the compilation of social interactions between Native communities on a scale sufficient to illustrate their participation in a larger social system. These are combined in a graphic titled "Wangunk Web of Social Interaction ca. 1670-1780," which is a concrete expression of Wangunk's nature as a socially connected entity. McMullen also employs visual aids in the form of maps to illustrate collected social interactions across the landscape, which could be described as "web-like" in appearance. The author's study on regional interaction is on a smaller and more focused geographical scale than McMullen's, but operates on the same principle. The Wangunk web of interaction is intended to give the reader a sense of how they fit into the Native social world around them. Through this method, Wangunk shall appear as the social node that it was, rather than as an isolated Indian settlement within colonial society.

The author places the Wangunks in what he calls the Central Connecticut social region, which is defined by both geographical and social factors. Central Connecticut is

characterized by a broad lowland, or valley, bounded by the Eastern Uplands and Western Uplands (Bell 1985:10). Through this region flows the Connecticut River, and one of its major tributaries, the Farmington River. This region's topography and natural resources proved very attractive for the settlement of many historic Indian communities, and supported denser populations than the bordering uplands. It is within this region that an historic association of Indian communities, known as the River Indians, can be identified. The Connecticut Colony's General Assembly recognizes this association in their use of the term "River Indians" and "Indians of the River" in the seventeenth century, which refers to the Indians of Central Connecticut en bloc. The notion of "River Indians" or "River Tribes" is clearly employed as a social region by Connecticut historians (DeForest 1853:53; Love 1935:81). DeForest identifies this association as extending along the Connecticut River from Windsor to Middletown, and also extending westward through the Central Valley along the Farmington River (DeForest 1853:52, 53). Thus, the author defines the Central Connecticut social region as the historic Indian communities situated within the broad valley of Central Connecticut as far north as Windsor and as far south as Middletown.

The Wangunks lived at the southern end of this social region, and were tied into a regional interaction system with their northerly neighbors. A map has been provided to show the location of Wangunk and other communities of the Central Connecticut social region in the mid-seventeenth century (**Appendix F**). Communities outside of this social region are classified, for the purposes of this study, as extraregional. Both intraregional and extraregional social connections held by the Wangunk community are presented to illustrate their nature as a socially connected entity. This study recognizes all forms of

social interaction, aside from acts of hostility, including migration, dual residency, kinship ties, intercommunity landholdings, political alliance and visitation. It will be demonstrated that Wangunk was well engaged with its fellow communities in the Central Connecticut social region, and also held numerous social ties to extraregional communities, including some along southern New England's coast.

After taking a regional perspective, this study demonstrates that the Wangunk community partook in a regionwide "reintegration" during the eighteenth century. The Wangunks utilized their social network to find new homes in other communities as they adapted to changing social contexts. The community largely dispersed during the 1740's and first found homes amongst Indian communities at Tunxis, Hartford, Mohegan, and New Hartford, and some eventually went on to participate in the Brotherton Movement. The regional analysis shows that the Wangunks were part of a greater trend in Central Connecticut, where all communities dissolved by the turn of the nineteenth century in a "dance" of migrations and reintegrations.

There is a deficiency of ethnohistoric studies which address the social linkages between historic Indian communities in Connecticut. Ethnohistories of other Connecticut groups do not overtly examine social networking as a sub-topic, although it is often addressed peripherally in the form of community migrations. An ethnohistory of a historic Mahican community in Salisbury provides some general facts on community migrations (Binzen 1997:88-93). An ethnohistory of the historic "Lighthouse Tribe" of Barkhamstead does not place any specific focus on the community's bonds with other Native peoples (Feder 1994). The definitive ethnohistoric compilation on the Mashantucket Pequots of Ledyard is conspicuously devoid of any sustained discussion

about the tribe's social connections with closely related neighboring groups such as the Mohegans or Eastern Pequots, although issues of migration/diaspora are explored (Hauptman and Wherry 1990). A history of New Haven's Quinnipiac Indians provides a thorough and detailed examination of emigration in the eighteenth century (Menta 1994:312-374), and can be viewed as a significant interdisciplinary contribution to the study of social networking. An ethnohistory of the Paugussett tribes, who inhabited the lower Housatonic River area, focuses on defining tribal territorialities and sociopolitical organizations within the study area, but does not go far in presenting the interrelationships of these groups (Wojciechowski 1992). An M.A. thesis examines the ethnohistory of five Connecticut State recognized tribes, but does not illustrate intertribal connections (Soulsby 1981).

Ethnohistoric research that places a specific focus on regional interaction promises to make a critical contribution to the cultural understanding of present-day southern New England Indians. This is an area where Native peoples are struggling to redefine themselves, and their histories. Unfortunately, the process of federal acknowledgement fosters a distorted view of "tribes." The Department of the Interior requires groups to prove their identity as a separate tribe, without memberships in other tribes (Campisi 1990:183, 184). This political precedent could promote "tunnel vision" within tribal studies. McMullen notes that "Tribally focused works continue to emphasize the distinctiveness and relative isolation of tribes to the detriment of understanding them within larger social systems" (McMullen 2000). The result is a failure to recognize the social and political connections which bonded communities together, which, in turn, insured the survival of Native people in southern New England

as a whole. The author promotes this perspective for ethnohistoric research, not with the intention of detracting from the notion of a tribe as a self-sufficient political unit, but rather, as an attempt to illuminate an aspect of tribal history that has not yet been in the foreground of many tribally based studies.

As a preview, this narrative can be broken down into three general segments. The first segment (Chapters 2-4) provides a historical context for the emergence of the Wangunks as a River Indian community in the seventeenth century (ca. 1600-1675). The second segment (Chapters 5, 6) focuses on the ethnohistory of the Wangunk community during their tenure on reserved land, and follows them into their dispersal (ca. 1675-1780). The third segment (Chapter 7) is dedicated to placing the Wangunk community within a regional social context. This is achieved by comparing the Wangunks to some of their contemporary communities in the Central Connecticut social region, and exploring the nature of Wangunk's social connections to them, and other, extraregional, communities. The significance of Wangunk's social network will be presented in light of a regional perspective.

CHAPTER 2—Trade, Warfare, and Colonization, ca. 1600-1645

2.1 The Sequins and the Fur Trade

The Indians living in Central Connecticut participated in a trade economy with Europeans prior to colonization. Dutch merchant and cartographer Adriaen Block made the earliest recorded encounter with these Indians in 1614 during an exploratory voyage in the New World representing the interests of Dutch investors. During an excursion up the Connecticut River, Block identified the Indians of Central Connecticut with the ethnonym "Sequins." Block represents their home on his map¹ as a cluster of five villages on the Connecticut River. Block also depicts a cluster of villages labeled "Nawaas."² These likely represent a grouping of settlements centered below Windsor Locks, the uppermost reach of his Connecticut River excursion.

Johan de Laet, a director of the Dutch West India Company, describes the Sequins and Nawaas as Captain Block encountered them:

There are a few inhabitants near the mouth of the river [Connecticut], but at the distance of fifteen leagues above they become numerous; their nation is called Sequins. From this place the river stretches ten leagues, mostly in a northerly direction, but it is very crooked; the reaches extend from northeast to southwest by south, and it is impossible to sail through all of them with a head wind. The depth of water varies from eight to twelve feet, is sometimes four and five fathoms, but mostly eight and nine feet. The natives there [Windsor Locks area] plant maize, and in the year 1614 they had a village resembling a fort for protection against the attacks

¹ This map is commonly known as the "Adriaen Block Chart" of 1614, and is housed at the Dutch National Archives.

² This may be the equivalent of "Nowashe", an Indian place name referring to land between the Podunk and Scantic Rivers comprising present-day South Windsor (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:128).

of their enemies. They are called Nawaas and their sagamore was then named Moraheick. (Laet 1909:43)

The inhabitants of these villages were in the midst of a competitive, and sometimes violent, trade economy involving Europeans and other Indian groups. Agents of the Dutch West India Company, established in 1621, became the most competitive European traders along the southern New England coast. Within a decade of the company's establishment, the coastal fur bearing animal population was significantly depleted. As harvesting activities pushed toward the interior, coastal Indians increasingly turned toward the economics of wampum production (McBride 1994). The resulting economy can be characterized as a "trade triangle" (Ceci 1977:277-278). First, European investors shipped trade goods to wampum producing Indians inhabiting southern New England's coastal region, where they were exchanged. Next, the wampum was transported inland and used to purchase furs from interior fur-trapping Indians, who placed a great value on shell beads. The triangle was complete when these furs were shipped back to the European investors and sold at great profit.

In 1626 the English began to compete with Dutch traders in southern New England. This trade competition may have been chiefly economic in nature for the merchants and investors who turned a profit. However, it also reflected a broader imperial battle between England and Holland for territory in the New World. The English established a colony at Plymouth in 1620 and the Dutch at New Amsterdam in 1625, but there remained plenty of hinterland between these two colonial centers that promised opportunities for trade and settlement. The Connecticut River became a "hot

zone" where the English and Dutch struggled for control, and Indian groups living along the banks found themselves in an economic and political battleground.

The Pequots became the most powerful Native traders in southern New England.

Dutch journalist Nicolaes Van Wassenauer provided the following account in 1626:

The Sickenames³ dwell toward the North, between the Brownists [English] and the Dutch. The chief of this nation has lately made an agreement with Pieter Barentsz not to trade with any other than him. Jaques Elekes imprisoned him in the year 1622 in his yacht and obliged him to pay a heavy ransom, or else he would cut off his head. He paid one hundred and forty fathoms of Zeewan, which consists of small beads which they manufacture themselves, and which they prize as jewels. On this account he has no confidence in any one but this one now. (Van Wassenauer 1909:86)

To minimize potential trading hostilities, the Pequots chose Barentsz as their sole Dutch contact. Such caution, however, did not appear not reflect a political weakness. The Pequots were a very powerful group as evidenced by a list of Barentsz' trade contacts which includes "the Sickenames, to whom the whole north coast is tributary" (Van Wassenauer 1909:87).

The Sequins' home in Central Connecticut was a strategic collection point for the fur trade, attracting the attention of early traders. The Pequots waged war on the Sequins, who would be a valuable asset if subjected as tributaries. The Sequins were defeated by the Pequots "after three different battles, in open field" according to an account provided by New Netherland director Wouter van Twiller (de Heeren 1725:607; McBride 1994:48). Following this defeat the Pequots likely reaped tributary benefits from local communities, and an increased control over fur trade coming from the interior.

³ Referring to the inhabitants of the Sickenames (Mystic) River, also known as the Pequots.

By 1631 the Sequins were chafing under Pequot domination. That year Wahquinnacut, a Connecticut River sachem, journeyed to the Massachusetts Bay colony with an open invitation to settle his territory. On April 4, 1631 John Winthrop, the first governor of Plymouth Colony, recorded the sachem's offer:

Wahginnacut a Sagamore vpon the river Quoanehtacut which lyes west of naragancet came to the Governor at Boston with Iohn Sagam. & Iacke Strawe (an Indian which had liued in England, & had served Sir Walter Earle, & was now turned Indian againe) & diuerse of their Sanopps: & brought a lettre to the Gouvernor from mr Endecott, to this effecte, that the said Wahgin. was verye desirous to have some Englishmen to come plante in his countrye & offered to finde them Corne & give them yearly 80 skins of Beauer, & that the Countrye was verye fruitfull &c: & wiced that there might be 2: men sent with him to see the Countrye; the Gouvernor entertained them at dinner but would sende none with him; he discovered after that the said Sagamore is a verye treacherous man, & at warre with the Pekoath... (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:49)

Waghginnacut hoped that the introduction of an English presence might curtail Pequot domination in his region. William Bradford, the second governor of Plymouth Colony, recalls the purpose of this solicitation as such: "for their end was to be restored to their country again" (Bradford 1989:258).

The Pequot's political power in Central Connecticut is evidenced in a land sale to the Dutch. In June 1633 Jacob Van Curler and a small party of Dutch agents purchased a tract of land commonly known as Dutch Point, producing the following deed:

The aforesaid Van Curler, and sachem named Wapyquart or Tattoepan,⁴ chief of Sickenames River,⁵ and owner of the Fresh River⁶ of New Netherland, called, in their tongue, Connetticuck, have amicably agreed for the purchase and sale of the tract named Sicajooock,⁷ a flat extending about a mile down along the river to the next little stream, and upwards

⁴ The chief Pequot sachem.

⁵ Referring to the Mystic River.

⁶ Referring to the Connecticut River.

⁷ This area is located in present-day Hartford and is spelled "Saukiaug" in English records.

beyond the kill, being a third of a mile broad to the height of land, on condition that all tribes might freely, and without any fear or danger, resort to the purchased land for purposes of trade; and whatever wars might arise between them and others, may be waged or carried on without any of them entering on our said territory. It is further expressly conditioned by this contract, and assented to by the aforementioned chief, that Sequeen should dwell with us, all at the request, and to the great joy of the sachem Altarbaenhoet,⁸ and all interested tribes. This has taken place, on the part of the Sequeen, with the knowledge of Magaritinne, chief of Sloop's Bay.⁹ The chief of the Sickenames is paid for the said land... (O'Callaghan 1856 Vol.1:150-151)

Tattoepan had seized political control over Central Connecticut by this time. This document demonstrates that the former chief sachem of the Sequins was, himself, named "Sequeen." It appears that Sequin had been previously exiled from the region and was being allowed to return at the request of Altarbaenhoet and "interested tribes." Tattoepan's reign of power was short lived as Dutch traders murdered him the following year.

After the Dutch purchased this land, they erected a small blockhouse named Fort Good Hope that was armed with two cannons (Love 1935:103). English trade competition arrived the same year. In September 1633, a group of Massachusetts Bay traders sailed up the Connecticut River with plans to erect their own trading house. As they sailed past Fort Good Hope, the Dutch forbade them to pass upriver (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:99). Despite this warning, they sailed upriver to erect their own trading house at Matianocke.¹⁰ Placing this structure north of the Dutch fort, the English could more effectively intercept Indian trade coming from the interior. Thus, the Sequins had

⁸ Alternately spelled "Natawanute" in English records. He was the sachem of Matianocke, in present-day Windsor (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:109).

⁹ Referring to the west side of Narragansett Bay.

¹⁰ Later renamed Windsor by the English.

accepted the establishment of two European outposts within their general territory in less than a year's span.

2.2 The Smallpox Pandemic and English Colonization

Many factors were changing the social world of the Sequins, but none paralleled the effects of foreign disease. Their population was decimated by a virulent smallpox pandemic that swept through southern New England's Indian communities. John Winthrop noted the spread of this disease and its affect on trade activities on Jan. 20 1634:

Hall & the 2: other who went to Conectecott november 3 [1633]: came now home, havinge lost themselues & endured mucche miserye. they enformed vs, that the small poxe was gone as farr as any Indian plantation was knowne to the west & mucche people dead of it. by reason whereof they could have no trade. (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:108-109)

During the Winter/Spring of 1633/34 the Sequins lost a large portion of their population to smallpox. Bradford describes this plague's effects on the Indians living near the English trading house at Matianocke:

But of those of the English house, though at first they were afraid of the infection, yet seeing their woeful and sad condition and hearing their pitiful cries and lamentations, they had compassion of them, and daily fetched them wood and water and made them fires, got them victuals whilst they lived; and buried them when they died. For very few of them escaped, notwithstanding they did what they could for them, to the hazard of themselvs. (Bradford 1989:271)

Contact with Europeans had brought smallpox to the Indians of southern New England, and social stress resulted. Some who had died left positions of leadership open that could not necessarily be filled according to traditional rules, and competition for

these positions was exacerbated by the politics of the fur trade (Starna 1990:47). Therefore, traditional leadership structures were left in a weakened and confused state.

Massachusetts Bay authorities were keenly aware of this event. In fact, John Winthrop interpreted it as an act of God, meant to clear the land of Indians so that the English could settle new territory. He clearly expresses this sentiment in a letter to Sir Nathaniel Rich, dated May 22, 1634: "For the natives, they are neere all dead of the small poxe, so as the Lord hathe cleared our title to what we posess" (Winthrop 1943 Vol.3:167). This drastic reduction of the Native population provided an ideal opportunity for Massachusetts Bay colonists to establish a presence in the Connecticut River valley. Bradford portrays the settlement of the Connecticut River as an opportunistic event:

Some of their neighbours in the Bay, hearing of the fame of Connecticut River, had a hankering mind after it and now understanding that the Indians were swept away with the late great mortality, the fear of whom was an obstacle unto them before, which was now being taken away, they began to prosecute it with great eagerness. (Bradford 1989:280)

The Massachusetts Bay colony seized this opportunity to settle Central Connecticut. The Pequot's political strength was temporarily diminished in the wake of population loss, and they could not maintain control over the Sequins or fur trading in their territory. The early English traders and settlers would assert their political dominance here in years to come.

After the smallpox pandemic, Massachusetts Bay established three permanent settlements in Central Connecticut. John Oldham and three other Massachusetts Bay traders had made an overland journey to Connecticut in 1633 (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:97), which provided an opportunity to reconnoiter the area and network with local Indians. In the summer of 1634 Oldham returned to the area with a company of settlers who planted

themselves at Pyquag, later called Wethersfield (Tarbox 1886:31). In 1635 Wethersfield received another accession of settlers, as did the small company maintaining Windsor's trading house (Tarbox 1886:32). In 1636 another company of settlers arrived to establish the settlement that would eventually be called Hartford (Tarbox 1886:35). The settlements of Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford became the first three towns in Central Connecticut (see **Appendix E**), and all negotiated with local sachems to establish diplomatic relations and secure settlement rights.

2.3 Early Troubles at Wethersfield

Wethersfield was the southernmost English settlement, being approximately five miles distant from Wangunk. It was established on the west side of the Connecticut River, in the vicinity known as "Pyquag" in the local Native dialect. Sequin, whom the English also referred to as Sowheag, had taken up residence there as sachem.

The first arrivals from Massachusetts Bay negotiated with Sequin in an effort to establish the legality of their settlement. The General Court¹¹ retroactively recorded this negotiation on June 16, 1665; however, no original written deed is known to exist:

This is to certify unto all whom may concerne, that vpon his certaine knowledge, by the advice of the Court, Wethersfield men gaue so much unto Sowheag as was to his sattisfaction for all their plantations lyeing on both sides the great River, wth the Islands, viz. six miles in bredth on both sides of the River, and six miles deep from the River westward, and three miles deep from the River eastward. Thus testifyeth George Hubbard. (*Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut* [hereafter cited as PRCC], Vol.1:5)

¹¹ The terms "General Court" and "General Assembly" refer to the Connecticut Colony's legislature.

It was not long before diplomatic problems developed. According to Governor Winthrop, Sequin gave the English land at Pyquag so he could benefit from their protection. However, Sequin was driven away by Wethersfield colonists during a dispute that resulted in a collapse of diplomatic relations. Sequin relocated his place of residence to Mattabesett. John Winthrop explains this falling out and how it is linked to the Wethersfield Massacre in a journal entry:

There came letters from Connecticut to the governor of the Massachusetts, to desire advice from the magistrates and elders here about Sequin and the Indians of the river, who had, underhand, (as we conceived,) procured the Pequods to do that onslaught at Weathersfield the last year. The case fell out to be this: Sequin gave the English land there, upon contract that he might sit down by them, and be protected, etc. When he came to Weathersfield, and had set down his wigwam, they drave him away by force. Whereupon, he not being of strength to repair this injury by open force, he secretly draws in the Pequods. Such of the magistrates and elders as could meet on the sudden returned this answer, viz.: That, if the cause were thus, Sequin might, upon this injury first offered by them, right himself either by force or fraud, and that by the law of nations; and though the damage he had done them had been one hundred times more than what he sustained from them, that is not considerable in point of a just war; neither was he bound (upon such an open act of hostility publicly maintained) to seek satisfaction in a peaceable way; it was enough that he had complained of it as an injury and breach of covenant. According to this advice, they proceeded and made a new arrangement with the Indians of the river. (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:252)

Colonial authorities believed Sequin's angst toward the Wethersfield colonists was directly linked to the Wethersfield Massacre. This alleged Pequot raid on the Wethersfield plantation occurred on April 23, 1637. Winthrop records the assailants as having "killed six men, being at their work, and twenty cows and a mare, and had killed three women, and carried away two maids" (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:213). The English suspected Sequin of calling in the Pequots to execute the attack, but proof of this solicitation is wanting in the documentary record.

Prior to this raid, the Pequots had begun to take increasingly aggressive actions against English colonists on the Connecticut River. They were attempting to reclaim the political and economic power they once held in Central Connecticut and assert their dominance over the new English arrivals. The Wethersfield Massacre was the last Pequot attack that the English would endure. Colonial authorities moved to definitively wipe out their Pequot adversaries.

2.4 War and Fear in the Connecticut Colony

Shortly after the Wethersfield Massacre, the English colonial militia attacked the Pequots at Mystic Fort. This mission was completed with the aid of Mohegan and Narragansett allies. Between three hundred and seven hundred Pequots died in the attack (Hauptman 1990:73). Some of the tribe's survivors were forced into local slavery while others were exported as far as the West Indies. Pequots who had avoided capture attempted to flee their homeland in small groups seeking refuge among the Mohawks. Roger Williams noted the capture of one such group in a letter written July 21, 1637 to John Winthrop:

This weeke Souwonckquawsin¹² old Sequins Sonn cut of [off] 20 Pequot women and children in their passage to the Mowhauogs allso one Sachim who 3 yeares agoe was with you in the Bay with a present. (LaFantaise 1988 Vol.1:107)

Sequassen was the sachem of Saukiaug, and a son of Sequin. Perhaps this capture was an act of vengeance against the Pequots who had conquered the Sequins in previous years. Or perhaps it was an attempt to gain community members in the wake of

¹² More commonly spelled Sequassen.

population loss. Following the Pequot War, sachems of southern New England competed to acquire these Pequot refugees as captive "tribal" members (LaFantaise 1988 Vol.1:159 *note*). Despite any Indian motivations, colonial authorities were certainly pleased to know the whereabouts these refugees.

Sequin,¹³ on the other hand, did not please colonial authorities. The General Court at Hartford acknowledged former difficulties with Sowheag and a desire to improve relations in April 1638:

Whereas, vppon full debate and hearinge, the matters of Iniuries & difference betweene Soheage, an Indian the Sachem of Pyquaagg nowe called Wythersfield, & th' English Inhabitants thereof, and It app'es to the Cort that there hath beene divers Iniuries offered by some of the saide English inhabitants to the said Soheage, as alsoe the saide Sowheage & his men haue likewise committed divers outrages & wronges against the saide English, yet because as was conceiued the first breach was on the saide English p'te, All former wronges whatsoever are remitted on both sides and the saide Soheage is againe receiued in Amytie to the saide English, & Mr. Stone, Mr. Goodwin & Tho. Staunton are desired to goe to the saide Soheage & to treat him accordinge to the best of their discretion & to compose matters betweene the saide English and the saide Soheage and vppon their reporte there shalbe some setled course in the thinge. (PRCC, Vol.1:19-20)

Whether or not the court officers "composed matters" is uncertain, but difficulties arose again the following year. In August 1639 the General Court planned a military expedition to Mattabesett. Apparently, Sowheag's people had caused further trouble for the English, and Connecticut's General Court was convinced that he was harboring the perpetrators of the Wethersfield Massacre:

The manifold insolvencyes that haue beene offered of late by the Indians, putt the Court in mind of that w^{ch} hath beene too long neglected, viz.: the execution of justice vppon the former murtherers of the English, and it

¹³ From this point in history onwards, Sequin is more frequently referred as Sowheag; this narrative does the same.

was vpon serious consideracon and debate thought necessary and accordingly determined, that some speedy course be taken herein, and for effecting hereof it was concluded that 100 men be levyed and sent downe to Mattabesecke, where severall guilty persons reside and haue beene harbored by Soheage, notwithstanding all meanes by way of persuation have beene formerly used to him for surrendering them vpp into o^r handes; and it is thought fit that these counsells be imparted to o^r friends at Quinnip[ioke the New Haven Colony] that p^rvision may be made for the safety of the new plantacons, and vppon their ioynt consent p^rceede or desist. (PRCC, Vol.1:31-32)

The New Haven colony did not want to become involved in another Indian war so shortly after the Pequot War. The General Court withdrew the proposed expedition to Mattabesett after New Haven voiced its concerns (PRCC, Vol.1:32).

Sowheag's political strength in the Mattabesett area and lack of cooperation with colonial authorities discouraged English settlement there for another decade. In February 1640 the General Court was attempting to hold Sowheag accountable for a mare that was killed "by his Indeans", among other "insolent caridges of his" (PRCC, Vol.1:58). The Court decided to inform the New Haven colony that Sowheag was an enemy of the English and suggested that punitive military action be taken against him. It appears that such action was never taken, and Mattabesett remained a hostile territory for a number of years. In Feb. 1641 Colonial authorities went so far as to ban the felling of trees "wthin three myles of the mouth of Matabezeke river" (PRCC, Vol.1:67), which suggests the maintenance of a political buffer zone.

In August 1642 Indian informants provided colonial authorities with news of a pan-Indian conspiracy to destroy English settlements. According to their reports, Miantonimo, a Narragansett sachem, was attempting to form a confederation with Sowheag and Sequassen "for destruction of the English and generally throughout New

England" (Massachusetts Historical Society 1825 3d Ser., Vol.3:161; PRCC, Vol.1:73 *note*). John Winthrop was informed of the attack plan in letters sent by the Connecticut General Court:

...the Indians all over the country had combined themselves to cut off all the English, that the time was appointed after harvest, the manner also, they should go by small companies to the chief men's houses and seize their weapons, and then others should be at hand to prosecute the massacre (Winthrop 1996 Vol.1:406)

During the following months of September and October, the Connecticut River towns prepared to defend themselves (PRCC, Vol.1:74-75), but this war never materialized.

Such fears discouraged southward expansion of the Connecticut Colony until mid-century. Sowheag maintained control over the lands immediately down river from Wethersfield, which included the place known as Wangunk. He appears to have maintained a significant degree of physical and political separation between his people and the colonial townships to the north.

CHAPTER 3—Colonial Expansion and Erosion of Local Native Power, ca. 1645-1676

3.0 Introduction

Sowheag's people did not remain isolated from English colonists for long. Middletown was established in 1650, being the fourth river town in Central Connecticut. These towns were situated in the midst of a territory still occupied by numerous Indian communities formerly known as the Sequins. These Indian communities came to be identified by the English as the "River Indians." During this period, the English river towns grew in population and expanded their use of land and other natural resources.

The political solidarity and leadership structures of the River Indian communities weakened in the face of rapid social change. River Indian sachems eventually reached terms with colonial authorities whereby their people would live only on reserved lands. The Wangunk reservation, created for the posterity of Sowheag, is one of several such reservations forged in these political negotiations. A final and definitive blow to Native power in southern New England would occur during King Phillip's War, which affected all Indian communities in the region, including Wangunk.

3.1 Wethersfield Grows and Middletown is Established

Mattabesett is an Algonkian place name referring to the Mattabesett River and/or the general vicinity surrounding its junction with the Connecticut River. Nineteenth-century historians claim that Sowheag had a fort, or fortified village, at Mattabesett. It

was allegedly located at "Indian Hill,"¹⁴ an area of high ground lying to the west of Middletown city (Barber 1836:507; Field 1819:35). Sowheag had the ability to "call around him many warriors, whose wigwams stood thick on both sides of the Connecticut, at points particularly desirable for settlements" (Field 1819:35).

Following the Pequot War, there existed a decade of minimal interaction between the Indians occupying Mattabesett and the Connecticut Colony. During this period, English towns lying to the north were growing in population and expanding their use of land and other natural resources. By mid-century, Central Connecticut's river valley had lost its importance as a fur trading center, as the zone of exchange had been pushed farther north. The English had won an Imperial competition to dominate the Connecticut River Valley. The Dutch eventually lost their land rights at Saukiaug, abandoning their settlement during the 1650's (Love 1935:11). Meanwhile, English merchants of the Connecticut River refocused their energies on collecting and redistributing local farm goods to other New England merchants (Bailyn 1955:55).

Until 1650, Wethersfield was the town nearest to Wangunk. Its principal products were agricultural crops, livestock, and lumber. The earliest crops sown by colonial farmers at Pyquag were generally maize, beans, and barley (Stiles 1904 Vol.1:614). There were also rich lands and resources on the Connecticut River's east side, which drew Wethersfield settlers across the river. Naubuc and Nayaug, lands on the river's east side, first served as pasture for livestock. Shortly before 1650, the first permanent colonial homes were built at Nayaug (McNulty 1983:10), where farming practices were established. Lumbering activities also spread to the river's east side, as indicated by the

¹⁴ Not to be confused with the "Indian Hill" at Wangunk.

construction of two sawmills there between 1667 and 1672, (Stiles 1904 Vol.1:640). A major product of such sawmills was barrel staves, many of which were exported to the West Indies. Wethersfield's population had grown to approximately 113 families by 1654 (PRCC, Vol.1:265).

Colonial settlement moved closer to Wangunk with the establishment of a plantation at Mattabesett (see **Appendix G**). Prior to any acts of colonization, Governor John Haynes secured land rights there from Sowheag. No written deed was produced on this occasion but the transaction is alluded to in a later confirmatory deed (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:200-201). In March 1650, the General Court at Hartford appointed a committee to explore the land at Mattabesett (PRCC, Vol.1:206), and it was settled as a plantation the same year at two loci known as the Upper Houses and Lower Houses. In November 1653 the plantation of Mattabesett was officially declared a town, with the new title of Middletown (PRCC, Vol.1:250). Middletown's population grew from approximately thirty-one families in 1654, to fifty-two families in 1670 (Field 1819:32).

3.2 The Political Strength of the River Indians Dissolves

After mid-century, the political control once held over Central Connecticut by River Indian sachems shifted into the hands of the Connecticut Colony. This may be largely attributed to a decline in Native population in the face of expanding English settlement. But perhaps a less apparent, yet key, contributing factor was "intertribal" conflict, which ultimately worked against the solidarity and political autonomy of Indian communities.

Uncas¹⁵ and his sons pursued political ambitions among the River Indians and became figures of high status among them. Colonial authorities viewed Uncas as an ally due to his assistance in the Pequot War, and generally endorsed his efforts to govern other Indians. Uncas and Sequassen¹⁶ became involved in a power struggle that illustrates the ironically self-destructive effects of local Native politics in the face of colonialism.

Sequassen and Uncas competed for political power within the Native community and for the favor of colonial authorities during the 1640's. In the early 1640's, Sequassen's warriors made a failed attempt to assassinate Uncas on the Connecticut River (DeForest 1853:187). This incident fueled Uncas's resentment, and in 1643 he retaliated by attacking Sequassen at Saukiaug (Love 1935:86). In Oct. 1664 the General Court recalled this incident:

The Maior testifyeth that Vncass did beat out Sunckquasson and his men out of theire country in a just warre (as Mr. Haines and the Major conceiued,) and deliuered vp his right from Tomheganomset upwards to the English, whoe gaue the sayd Sunckquasson and his men leaue to hunt to that Brooke; (PRCC, Vol.1:434)

The 1642 Indian conspiracy had struck fear into the Connecticut Colony, and Sequassen was an alleged conspirator in that plot. Uncas' campaign against this particular sachem likely contributed to the security of the Connecticut Colony.

Sequassen's political defeat was part of a broader power struggle between the Indian leaders of southern New England. Miantinomo, a Narragansett sachem, attempted revenge on Uncas for this act, claiming Sequassen was his relative (DeForest

¹⁵ The chief Mohegan sachem.

¹⁶ This prominent River Indian sachem presided over Saukiaug, in present-day Hartford (Twitchell 1907:30).

1853:188). Uncas subsequently captured Miantinomo and delivered him into the hands of colonial authorities who sentenced him to death (DeForest 1853:196). The Narragansetts continued the feud against the Mohegans, waging war in 1644 and 1645 (LaFantaise 1988 Vol.1:222 *note*).

Sequassen remained in exile until 1650 when the Court of Commissioners allowed him to return to the Saukiaug area (DeForest 1853:222). Shortly after his return, Sequassen managed to recover his former status as a sachem. In October, 1651, Uncas expressed his disapproval to the General Court in Hartford:

And Whereas hee certifies in his letter that hee is not satisfied in Saquassens being exhalted vnder our power to great Sachemship, this Courte declares that they doe not know of any such thinge, neither doe they or shall they allowe or approoue thereof. (PRCC, Vol.1:228)

Uncas also complained to the Court of Commissioners that Sequassen had failed to pay him a sum of wampum as compensation for former troubles (PRCC, Vol.1:228 *note*). After the mid-seventeenth century, Connecticut Colony authorities were increasingly involved in regulating the political affairs of local Indians.

The political might of River Indian sachems was becoming a thing of the past. As previously illustrated, Sowheag had been defeated by the Pequots in earlier years, temporarily exiled, and returned to the southern portion of his former domain. His son, Sequassen, suffered a similar fate. He had been defeated by the Mohegans, temporarily exiled, and returned to his former domain to find a more powerful colonial government.

Sowheag was noted as deceased in a 1649 letter by New Amsterdam's Governor Stuyvesant (Trumbull 1886:108). He had long been a chief sachem among the River Indians, and local Indian communities and their leaders must have mourned his passing.

They had lost an important icon in a time when local Native power and autonomy was rapidly eroding.

3.3 Middletown's Indian Reservations are Created

As the colonial towns of Central Connecticut expanded, their authorities attempted to secure land rights on a region-wide scale. Windsor, Hartford, Wethersfield, and Middletown generated a large collection of Indian land deeds during the second half of the eighteenth century. All produced "confirmatory" deeds, renewing the original purchase of town land with resident Indian populations. Areas of land that had not yet been settled were secured through new land deeds. During this land exchange process some Indian communities received tracts of reserved land. The following section details the process by which the Wangunk reservation was instituted.

Although Gov. Haynes had secured land rights for Middletown shortly before 1650, Indian reservation property was not completely defined until 1673. During the intervening period Middletown members and local Indians shared the land in a way that was legally ambiguous.

Shortly after Middletown's settlement in 1650, lands on the river's east side were utilized by town members, but no one resided upon them. Middletown's land records indicate that town members were acquiring land on the east side beginning in 1652. Small parcels of land in Wangunk Meadow appear in these records as early as 1654. In 1666 John Savage was appointed "pounder" for the east side of the river to keep "cattell or cretres" off of the improved land (Van Beynum 1966:2). Farming and animal husbandry were not the only early interests pursued on the east side of the river. In 1665

Middletown regulated the quarrying of stone there to town members and in 1669 granted shipbuilding permission. Lumbering activities, previously banned in the Middletown area, were certainly resumed by its early settlers.

In May 1665 the General Court appointed officers to investigate differences pertaining to land boundaries between Middletown members and neighboring Indians (PRCC, Vol.2:14). In March 1670, the town selected a committee to investigate the bounds of Indian land at Wangunk (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.137). The following month the committee presented its report describing various scattered parcels of Indian land. The largest was a thirty-three-acre tract of upland by the Connecticut River, abutting on two "highways," one to the south and one to the east. This location is presently known as Indian Hill. There was also nine acres of land in Wangunk Meadow "lying in divers percels intermixed amongst the Englishes Meadow there." An undescribed "six or seven" acres of Indian land lay elsewhere. A separate record, dated April 24, 1670, states that these six or seven acres were located at Deer Island⁴ (unknown source quoted in Bayne 1884:495).

In 1670 there were approximately fifty-two families living in Middletown (Field 1819:32-33). That year, the town decided that all who were householders that year should be considered proprietors. By 1672 the town was preparing to lay out more land rights on the east side of the Connecticut River. It appears that the riverside upland immediately across from the Middletown settlements had already been divided among the proprietors in half mile lots, and Middletown wanted to prepare the interior for further division. Before this happened, all Indian claims would be legally nullified.

According to a deed of Jan 24, 1672 Sepannama¹⁸ and other local Indian proprietors confirmed Sowheag's original grant of Mattabesett with Middletown agents (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:200-201) (**Appendix A**). This deed provides a review of property boundaries. Middletown was bounded on the north by Wethersfield and on the south by Haddam. It would run six miles east of the Connecticut River, and as far west as the General Court would determine. In this transaction three hundred acres of land were reserved for the posterity of Sowheag on the Connecticut River's east side. Also mentioned is a previously created reservation on the west side of the Connecticut River for Sawsean and his descendants.

On June 18, 1672 the local Indians were prompted to choose the final placement of their three hundred-acre reservation and "acquit all claims and title to any lands within our [Middletown's] bounds" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.137). Middletown provided them with two options. They could either be suited with "undivided land if they like," or receive the land they "propound for." On April 8, 1673 another deed was drawn up, again confirming the Indian's sale of Middletown and the acceptance of reserved lands (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:201) (**Appendix B**). On May 28, 1673 the Indian reservation at Wangunk was permanently defined, with a list of thirteen Indian proprietors (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.138) (**Appendix C**). These Indian proprietors received the Indian Hill tract, with an estimated volume of fifty acres. They also received an estimated two hundred and fifty-acre tract of upland to the southeast. Not mentioned in this deed is the fact that some Wangunks

¹⁷ Also known as Wangunk Island and Gildersleeve Island.

¹⁸ She is identified as "daughter to Sowheage" in the confirmatory deed of Wethersfield (*Wethersfield Land Records*, Vol.2:202-203).

retained land in the English meadow and Deer Island, as evidenced by later land transactions.

After this reservation was defined, Middletown divided the land on the east side of the Connecticut River. Forty rights were laid out in 1675 between Wethersfield and Haddam bounds, in lots 2.5 miles long, running from an eastern boundary toward the Connecticut River (Field 1819:54). It was not until the 1690's that town members began to build their homes on the river's east side (Field 1819:54-55). The first resident to settle near Wangunk Meadow was probably William Cornwell (ca. 1703). By that time land rights had been thoroughly secured from the Indian proprietors so that Middletown's expansion could proceed without legal complications.

3.4 King Phillip's War, ca. 1675-1676

Central Connecticut was not the only region where Indian communities were rapidly losing political autonomy in the face of advancing colonization. This trend was occurring throughout southern New England, and it resulted in a violent and bloody backlash. Some traditionalist Indian groups attempted to destroy the English colonial presence in an effort to restore their political power and autonomy. This effort is known to history as King Phillip's War. The rebel Indian groups lost this war, which seemed to mark the final and definitive transfer of political power to the colonies in southern New England.

The role the River Indians would play in this war was not clearly defined, as the wartime politics of Central Connecticut were complex. The conflicting political agendas of colonial authorities, English-allied Mohegans, and rebel Indian groups created a

turbulent social climate. The Wangunks appear to have shared a close alliance with the neighboring Nayaug community during this war. This section discusses the war and how it involved the Wangunks and other Indians of Central Connecticut.

In June of 1675, Metacomet and the Wampanoags¹⁹ rebelled against English colonists who were encroaching on their land. This rebellion gradually spread, igniting a major war between the Indians and colonists of New England. Many Indian groups seized this opportunity to destroy English settlements in an attempt to reclaim their political autonomy.

During this war, the Connecticut Colony's General Court convened as a War Council. The War Council attempted to create an alliance with the "Indians of Farmington, Hartford, Wethersfield, and Midleton" on September 27, 1675 (PRCC, Vol.2:370). These allies were encouraged to locate and destroy enemies of this alliance, being any Indians hostile to the English. A bounty was issued on the enemy: 2 yards of cloth for a head, and 4 yards of cloth for every live captive.

The Mohegans, allies of the English, were not pleased with the lack of military initiative taken by the River Indians against rebel Indian groups. By October 1, they expressed "dissatisfaction with the Indians of the Riuer, and of their unwillingness to joyne with them in this war" (PRCC, Vol.2:372). However, some participation would be forthcoming. In September of 1675, Springfield was considered to be under threat of enemy attack. A force of Connecticut Indians was dispatched in October to seek out and

¹⁹ The Wampanoags were an association of Indian communities inhabiting southeastern Massachusetts. Metacomet was a prominent sachem among them.

destroy the enemy (PRCC, Vol.2:374), and among them was "Captain" Nessahegan who commanded eight warriors for scout duty (Trumbull 1886:14; Stiles 1892 Vol.1: 110).

At this point in time an Indian community lived at Nayaug,²⁰ which was within the bounds of Wethersfield. The Indians of Nayaug and Wangunk both maintained peaceable relations with their local English townships who permitted them to plant on town land. On October 9 the War Council provided the following advice:

Whereas Indians belonging unto Wethersfield and Wingham haue shewed their willingness to dwell peaceably in or townes and there to bring their corn for security, the Councill doe recommend it to the people at Wethersfield and Midleton upon whose lands the Indians haue planted, that the corn be equally divided upon the land where the corn grew, after they haue husked it, and the English to take care of their part and the Indians of what belongs to them, to get it conveyed into the towne for security. (PRCC, Vol.2:374)

Thus, the Indians were required to forfeit half of the corn that they planted on town land to its residents. This situation suggests that a peaceable, but not necessarily amicable, rapport existed between these Indians and their English neighbors.

Among these English neighbors was Mr. John Hollister who, according to tradition, was "friend to the Indians". This bit of lore is rooted in truth. Hollister was among the earliest Wethersfield colonists to build a house on the east side of the Connecticut River. His farm was located near the Nayaug floodplain where he probably had regular contact with local Indians. On October 11 the War Council noted that the Indians of Nayaug and Wangunk had been instructed to bring their corn into town for secured storage. Hollister was cited as one who could deliver such a message to the Nayaug and Wangunk Indians (PRCC, Vol.2:375).

²⁰ This area is located in present-day South Glastonbury.

Once crops were secured, the War Council took a number of River Indian leaders hostage in what appears to have been a hostile effort to insure the cooperation of the River Indians. This order was issued on October 26 to insure "their friendship to us and that no damage be done to us by them, which should be continued with us till the war is over" (PRCC, Vol.2:378). Within three days of this order "Sebawcatt" escaped from his guard during the night and the War Council enlisted the aid of Owaneco²¹ to remedy this matter (PRCC, Vol.2:379). He was sent with other Indians to pursue and retrieve the escaped hostage.

As the war progressed, the Wangunk community found themselves in a complex political situation. Although the War Council at Hartford considered the Wangunks allies, there is no evidence of trust. To help insure the continued cooperation of the Wangunks and Nayaugs, the War Council approved of Owaneco as an overseer on Nov. 1, 1675:

Owaneco and the Wonggum and Nayag Indians haueing agreed to liue together for the present, and the sayd Indians haueing put themselues voluntarily under the sayd Owanecoe's government, he is hereby permitted to liue with those sayd people and to make a fort at Wonggum or Nayaug, as they shall agree, and to govern them accordingly, till farther order. (PRCC, Vol.2:379)

This is another example of the Uncas lineage securing political power in Central Connecticut.

On February 24, 1675 the War Council advised "the Wonggum Indians to accept of Mr. John Holister's tender, and to com and build a fort at Nayage" (PRCC, Vol.2:411). According to local tradition, this fort was erected at a place known as Red Hill, an upland

²¹ A Mohegan sachem and eldest son of Uncas.

terrace overlooking the Connecticut River. It was a suitably defensible location because its southwestern and northwestern perimeters are bounded by extremely steep slopes, which would have hindered the approach of enemies.

As the war raged on, colonial authorities became convinced that the Narragansetts were deeply involved with Metacomb's designs. Josiah Winslow, Governor of Plymouth Colony, raised a militia for a winter campaign against the Narragansetts, which included 150 Connecticut Indians (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:223). During the spring of 1676 the Connecticut Colony launched numerous expeditions against the enemy, employing the tactics of guerilla warfare with the aid of Indian allies (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:227). It is unknown how many River Indians, if any, were involved in this war effort.

Several houses in each Connecticut town were converted into temporary fortresses for defense against Indian raids. Connecticut's War Council required each town to provide men for military expeditions, in proportion to its population. Of all these towns, Middletown provided the fewest men (PRCC, Vol.2:410, 445). They also provided fewer rations (PRCC, Vol.2:412) and failed to meet their quota on one occasion (PRCC, Vol.2:449). This indicates that Middletown, the colonial settlement closest to Wangunk, was relatively small and more vulnerable to attack during this time of crisis than its northerly neighbors.

By the summer of 1676, the English colonists had gained the upper hand in this war. The threat of enemy raids in the Middle Connecticut Valley began to fade, and River Indian sachem hostages were released. On June 23, 1676 the War Council ordered the release of three local sachems:

Vpon the earnest solicitation of the Indians, the Councill see cause to release Seacutt, Turramuggus and Wunnameise from being hostages, the Indians haueing carryed neighborly to the English, and they promiseing to carry well for the future. (PRCC, Vol.2:456)

The War Council must have considered "Nesehegan, Pashona, and Segushuck" less trustworthy, as they were not released until August (PRCC, Vol.2:470). A special term of release was applied to Nessahegan, who was confined to Hartford and forbidden to travel out of town without a special license.

The war ended shortly after Metacomet was killed in Rhode Island in August. The English had secured military control and were exercising retribution upon various Indian groups who had fought for Metacomet's cause.

It appears that the Red Hill fort was constructed during the war, and was still in use two years following. The nature of this use is unclear, but according a document dated April 15, 1678 "Indians of the fort in this town [Wethersfield] were convicted of drunkenness" (unknown source quoted in Stiles 1904 Vol.1:50).

CHAPTER 4—Native Social Networking in Central Connecticut, Seventeenth Century

This chapter characterizes the social environment of the Wangunk community by providing a glimpse into the structure of Central Connecticut's regional interaction system. Throughout this region, ties of affinity and consanguinity joined one community to the next. Among socially elite Indians, males tended to marry exogamously, and could take multiple wives. Females elites appear to have maintained strong connections to their home territories, as there was an association between females and landholding authority in local Native culture. The marriage of elites between communities resulted in a kin-based social network throughout, and beyond, Central Connecticut.

Nineteenth-century historian John W. DeForest provides the following insight in *History of the Indians of Connecticut from the earliest known period to 1850*:

Floating now down the Farmington to the Connecticut, we shall find the west bank of this river inhabited by a number of clans, obeying different sachems, and yet apparently living in close mutual connection. The same names may, to a certain extent, be found attached to Indian deeds in the town records from Windsor to Middletown, a distance of twenty-five miles. Thus it appears, either that one considerable tribe must have occupied the whole country, or that the various clans were closely united by national alliance and personal intermarriages. (DeForest 1853:53)

It was apparent to DeForest that the River Indians constituted a network of communities. Evidence of social networking manifested itself in Indian land deeds, which often bear

some of the same signatures, or marks, from one community to the next. These deeds provide evidence, often implied rather than direct, of how communities were connected.

In seventeenth-century Central Connecticut, several socially elite men held land rights from one territory to the next. Their social mobility evidences the social connections which bonded communities to one another. The author has selected three representative individuals to discuss: Nessahegan, Maussecup, and Attawanhood. The history of their landholdings sheds light on the structure of Central Connecticut's regional interaction system.

Nessahegan was one of the most widely connected sachems in Central Connecticut. His mark appears on land deeds as far south as Middletown (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:200-201), and as far north as West Springfield, Massachusetts (Everts 1879 Vol.1:19). He held his sachemdom in the Windsor area during the mid-seventeenth century. This is attested to by several land records identifying him as the sachem "of Paquinock" (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:124-126), however he was recorded as living "at Hartford" in 1668 (Bates 1924:184). Nessahegan's social mobility is coupled with ties of affinity and consanguinity between Indian communities. His wife, "*Nesaheg's squaw*," was a proprietor of Durham (Coginchaug) according to a deed of 1673 (Field 1819:141). If she was a local Indian, this indicates an exogamous marriage tie on Nessahegan's behalf. He also shared a kinship tie with the Mattatuck Indians, who lived within the bounds of seventeenth-century Farmington. Nessahegan sired a son among them as evidenced by a Farmington deed of 1684 bearing the marks of both Nessahegan and "Warun-Compound Nesaheg's son" (Smith, Smith and Dates 1907:16). Warun-Compound was a member of the Compound family, a prominent lineage of the area

known as Mattatuck. That he bore the Compound name attests to a matrilineal source of identity in this instance. Thus, it appears that Nessahegan formed an exogamous marriage tie to the Mattatucks. Nessahegan also had a son in the Windsor region, which was his home region, as attested to by a 1670 land deed executed there by "Sepanquet son of Nassahegan" (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:126). Nessahegan created ties of affinity and consanguinity between River Indian communities.

Another socially mobile Indian in Central Connecticut was Maussecup, who also held land rights in association with kinfolk. "*Massakump*" is listed as an original proprietor of Middletown and also held right in the newly created Wangunk reservation (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214). Maussecup was a son of the Narragansett sachem Miantonomi and brother of Canonchet (Love 1935:96). He belonged to the Narragansett royal lineage, but never gained status among them as a sachem. During King Phillip's War he was imprisoned at Hartford, which confirms his presence in Central Connecticut during that time. Maussecup took a wife in the Middletown area who sold land at Wangunk in May 1693 (PRCC, Vol.4:98), and as his widow in 1711 (PRCC, Vol.5:213). It appears that Maussecup also held land rights in Farmington which appear to involve a kinship connection. In 1681 Maussecup gave a quitclaim deed of Farmington lands, which he signed with a son (Gay 1901:6; Porter 1886:169). Thus, Maussecup represents a connection between Central Connecticut's Farmington and Wangunk Indians in addition to the more distant Narragansetts. His marriage (or perhaps marriages) in Central Connecticut was exogamous, and he gained land rights through this social bond.

Land rights in Central Connecticut appear to have been held largely in association with female "proprieters." It is true that seventeenth-century diplomacy between Indians and the Connecticut Colony was almost exclusively carried out between male leaders. However, when land exchanges were negotiated, the female role was usually not eclipsed by colonial politics. Women commonly mark land deeds of the seventeenth century, and it was not uncommon for male Indians to cite their mothers or wives as a source of landholding authority.

The clearest example of evidence supporting this phenomenon concerns Attawanhood,²² who possessed land rights in Central Connecticut during the second half of the seventeenth century. His land rights were secured through exogamous marriage-bonds. Documentary evidence from the 1670's demonstrates that Attawanhood took at least three wives in the region. He married Sougonosk, the daughter of Podunk sachem Arramamett. In 1672 Arramamett willed the greater part of Podunk lands to his daughter, Sougonosk, wife of Joshua, son of Uncas (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:109). Legal rights to these Podunk lands passed into Attawanhood's possession through this marriage. Following Attawanhood's death, a May 1685 General Court record confirms that certain "Podunk lands belongs to Joshua the sachem deceased or to his children" (PRCC, Vol.2:174). He also possessed land rights among the Tunxis of Farmington through marriages to two more wives. This was also recorded by the General Court:

Whereas Mr. John Wadsworth and Lnt Steele, in the year 1675, May 31, purchased all the rights of Joshua, Mohegan sachem, and his two wives rights and their mother's right, in the land within the limits of Farmington, as by their deed, date May 31, 1675... (PRCC, Vol.2:174)

²² Attawanhood, alias Joshua, was the third son of Uncas and sachem of the Western Niantics (DeForest 1853:288). The Western Niantics inhabited lands in the vicinity of Lyme, CT.

Attawanhood used the existing social structures to connect himself to the area, securing land rights and political power. He represents a connection between Central Connecticut's Podunk and Farmington Indians, in addition to the more distant Western Niantics.

The example of Attawanhood confirms that polygyny was practiced in Central Connecticut by socially elite Indians. English colonial authorities were not concerned with recording these social bonds in a direct manner, but land deeds provide an indirect glimpse at them. The author believes that some of the "mobile" male Indians who sign deeds from one region to the next did so by authority of marriage, resulting in lasting bonds between communities.

When a man married two or more women in different communities, it would logically follow that a matrilocal residence pattern existed for the children of such unions. It is likely that in Central Connecticut the offspring of socially elite Indians were generally raised in their mother's home territories. The author is not suggesting that matrilocal residence was a rigid rule among these Indians, but that the connection of socially prominent women to their homeland provided a structural framework for regional interaction in Central Connecticut.

This social framework among Central Connecticut's Indians melds into a larger pattern that extends to other parts of southern New England, and west among the Indians of New Netherland. Polygyny was practiced among the Indians of southern New England (Bragdon 1996:178), but may have varied in frequency from one region to the next. It existed among the Narragansett, although it was not common practice (Williams

1936:147). Their dialect employs terms which distinguish between marriages to one, two, three, and four wives. Dutch accounts describe the practice of polygyny among socially prominent Indian men in New Netherland (Van Wassenauer 1909:70; Van Der Donck 1968:82). Such men could take several wives in different areas who would keep a home for them and raise their offspring. A regional analysis of has not resolved the issue of post-marital residence among the Indians of southern New England (Bragdon 1996:179), but matrilineal kinship appears to have existed both among the Indians of New Netherland (Van Der Donck 1968:83) and among the Narragansetts (Aubin & Simmons 1975: 29).

This has been an overview of the organization, or social structures, which served as the framework for social networking in Native seventeenth century Central Connecticut, as reconstructed from land deed data. Bonds of affinity and consanguinity served to interconnect the River Indian communities. Among socially prominent Indians, males tended to marry exogamously, and could take multiple wives. The documentary record indicates that females asserted strong connections to their home territories, as there was an association between females and landholding authority in local Native culture. The marriage of elites between communities resulted in a kin-based social network throughout, and beyond, Central Connecticut. The Wangunks emerged into historical view as a River Indian community, therefore, they were ensconced in this system of regional interaction.

CHAPTER 5—The Wangunks and Their Neighbors, ca. 1680-1750

5.0 Introduction

During this period, some Indian communities in the Central Connecticut region dissolved or were abandoned. The Poquonnock community sold their small reservation, established in 1642, in 1659 (Stiles 1892 Vol.1:125-126). An Indian community at Mattabesett had vacated their reservation, established in 1660 (Bayne 1884:495), sometime after 1713 (Field 1853:35-36). The Podunk community gradually disposed of their lands, and in 1722 their last land claim was recorded (Goodwin 1879:34). However, Indian communities at Hartford, Farmington, and Wangunk persisted into the mid-eighteenth century.

Wangunk was a unique place on the Native landscape where a substantial Indian community resided through the first quarter of the eighteenth century. As the eighteenth century moved forward, the Wangunks witnessed the development of a colonial village within their immediate proximity. Colonial culture would exert pressures on the solidarity of the Wangunk community, which contributed to the dissolution of Wangunk's residential Indian population during the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

5.1 Aspects of Wangunk Reservation Life

Here, the author attempts to familiarize the reader with the place known as Wangunk and the people who lived there. Unfortunately, the information gathered here

is fragmentary, at best. As Middletown settlers moved to the east side of the Connecticut River they were not concerned with recording the lifeways of their Indian neighbors in a deliberate manner. During this period, an Indian community occupied the Wangunk reservation. Despite colonial intrusions, Wangunk remained an important place on the Native landscape for several decades. It served as a home with access to natural resources, and as a place for spiritual and ceremonial functions.

The Wangunks constituted a community. Indian hill, which comprised the smaller reservation tract by the Connecticut River's edge, could be characterized as the community's center. The location of a "council lodge" on Indian Hill is remembered in nineteenth century history (Bayne 1884:496). Middletown's land records indicate that Indian Hill was the primary locus of settlement, and community members had individual plots there. A 1730 deed describes two a parcels of land sold by "Moses Indian" at Indian Hill (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.22:24). One parcel abutted the land of "Simon Indian," while the other abutted the lands of Jose Robin, One Penny Hannah, Peter Sanchews, and Coschawit. In 1640, "Tom Robbin" sold an approximately one and three quarter-acre parcel of land at Indian Hill which abutted the land of John Coschaw, Ben Coschaw, and the Widow Ranney's, a non-Indian (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546). Such boundary descriptions demonstrate that Indian Hill was divided into a patchwork of privately owned parcels by the second quarter of the eighteenth century, which suggests Indian Hill was a locus of settlement. An expression of communal identity is evidenced in a 1765 petition submitted to the General Assembly by "We the Subscribers Indians of the Tribe of Wongunck in metabesett alias Midletown" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146). The Wangunks had a sachem

in the mid-eighteenth century named Cushoy (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.232-233), or alternately Tom Cushoy, which indicates that presence of a Native leadership structure. It appears that Robin, or “Doctor Robbin,” was a sachem there in years previous to Cushoy (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.133). On the basis of this evidence, the author submits that the inhabitants of Wangunk constituted a community.

Indian Hill served as the community’s burial ground and, unfortunately, some burials have been disturbed there since the Wangunk occupation. The historic Indian Hill area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places,²³ but the property is not formally protected by the town of Portland as an abandoned or neglected cemetery (Porier, Bellatoni, and Aganstata 1985:6-7). One statement pertaining to Wangunk burial practices can be made which is drawn from unintrusive data. By the 1720’s it appears that European burial traditions had entered into Wangunk practice. This is attested to by a tombstone that remained on Indian Hill as late as the 1870’s that read “Here lies the body of John Onekous who died August the 30th 1722, aged 26 years” (Bayne 1884:497). This tombstone was removed to Middletown (Neff 1927:179). In 1755, local Indians Tom Cushoy, his wife, and Jo Simon purchased coffins for themselves from Benoni Brown, who used thirty-six feet of board for the job (Sherrow 1999). This is further evidence of European burial practices, in addition to being a curiosity as they were all still living.

²³ It was nominated in 1980 (Clouette 1980).

Traditional Native religious practices persisted for some time. The Wangunks maintained a sweatlodge on Indian Hill, and its specific location was remembered in the nineteenth century:

The lot back of Newman Goff's is still called "hot house lot," from its being the place of an ancient Indian "sanitarium," made by digging in the river bank a hole, in which was placed a hot stone, the top being covered with boughs or a blanket, over which the Indian was placed. After a profuse perspiration had in this way been induced, the occupant rushed out and into the river. (Bayne 1884:496)

An early twentieth century historian identifies this location as "the hut lot" (Neff 1911:181). Indian Hill was a place where powows were held (Bayne 1884:497). One of the functions of the powow, referring to a type of Native priest and/or the ceremony he oversees, was to heal the sick.

Rev. Richard Treat, an itinerant minister, provides the only first hand account of Native religious practices among the Wangunk (transcribed in Talcott 1896:479-484). He wished to assess their population and decided to attend a "Great dance," which was held in the latter part of the summer of 1734. The participants met on Friday afternoon. When Rev. Treat returned to them the next day he found them "in a most forlorn Condition, Singing, dancing, humming, &c., the like to which I had never before seen." The Indians present had gathered to "take off their mourning Cloths for one that was dead."²⁴ Rev. Treat offered to preach to them the next day, but was told by one individual that "to morrow was their day" and he should not preach there. However, a number of Niantic and Mohegan Indians approached him and told him that if he would

²⁴ This account of Native mourning is consistent with the southern New England pattern (see Simmons 1986:48).

meet them at an adjacent house the next day they would come and hear him preach.²⁵ When he arrived the next day he decided to visit the group, apparently to check in on one of their children who was very sick. Upon arrival some of the Indians tried to drive him away, and shortly thereafter “they began the most Dolfull noise that Can be thought of, it Consisted of Grunting, Groning, Sighing, &c., which was Caused by their Smiting upon their breast.”²⁶ Rev. Treat supposed they were “in a paw wawe” and explained his reasoning. The recently deceased Indian for whom they had been in mourning had a quarrel with another Indian shortly before his death. While in his sickness, he called for his gun to kill a particular individual, which made others suspect that the individual poisoned him. Rev. Treat thought that the Indians in powow “wanted to know of the Devil whether it was so.” Although Rev. Treat’s account reflects a culturally biased perspective, it is detailed enough to illustrate the Wangunks, and their Niantic and Mohegan associates, practicing religious acts of a strictly Native context.

Among the Wangunks was a family known for their ability to cure tuberculosis, and their services were offered to people outside of the Native community. This is mentioned in a letter from Rev. William Russel, pastor of the church at Middletown, to Rev. Thomas Prince of Boston, Sept. 28, 1730. Rev. Russel provides a description of Middletown’s remarkables, including the medicinal skills of a Wangunk family:

Among the Wongung Indians there was a family noted for skill in curing the King’s evil. It was first practiced on the English by an Indian called Robin, and a grand-daughter of his, many years after, was very remarkable in her success in curing this terrible disease. Many very remarkable cures

²⁵ The fact that the Mohegans were more open to Rev. Treat’s offer may reflect the influence of a missionary school already established on their reservation.

²⁶ The practice of self-beating may have helped shamans reach a trance state “during which he spoke with his guardian and enemy spirits in their own language” (Simmons 1986:57).

have been [made by] them on persons where the most skillful English physicians have not been successfull. (Trumbull 1895:279-280)

Apparently, Robin and his granddaughter possessed the ability to cure "The King's evil," now identified as tuberculosis. Robin was one of the original recipients of the Wangunk reservation in 1673. In 1757 he is identified by a grandson as "Doctor Robbin" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2:133). Thus, the Robin family had earned a long-standing reputation for their medicinal talent.

The Wangunks appear to have had coexisted on peaceful terms with Middletown's Third Society. This is evidenced in 1728 when the Wangunk community was involved in a survey extending Bartlett Street east into the larger reservation tract. The survey team consisted of Middletown members William Cornwell and Nathaniel Savage, in addition to "Cuschoy in behalf of ye other Indians" (Sherrow 1999). Some Wangunks probably found employment among the growing English community. According to a 1702 diary entry, James Stancliff, a stone carver, had hired an Indian named Sacient to deliver a tombstone to a family in Stonington, CT (Sherrow 1999).

The Wangunks cultivated fruit trees at Indian Hill. According to a deed dated Jan 18, 1730/31, "Moses Indian" sold two land parcels at Indian Hill to Thomas Welles of Glastonbury, including "...all & Singular the Orcharding, profitts priviledges & appurtenances thereunto belonging..." (Middletown Land Records Vol.22:24). The fruit of choice may have been apples, as Rev. Treat noted "a number of aple trees" in 1734 (Talcott 1896:483). Fruit trees were also cultivated by Adam, an Indian living on Farmington's Tunxis reservation during the mid-eighteenth century (Menta 1994:339).

Such evidence suggests that orcharding may not have been uncommon among Central Connecticut's Indians during this time period.

Another part of the local landscape was Pocotopogue, a lake situated in the uplands to the east of the reservation. According to tradition, this lake was frequented by Indians who used the central island as a meeting place during the early days of English settlement (Field 1819:56). An "old Indian Hunting House" was noted on the west side of the lake during a 1722 land survey (Crofut 1937 Vol.2:478). Perhaps Pocotopogue served as a winter hunting ground for the Wangunks and/or other local Indians.

The population of the Wangunk community may have been difficult to assess. This is due, in part, to the multiple residencies some Indians held amongst Native communities. Indian Hill may have represented the center of the community, but residency was not necessarily bounded to that location. For example, the widow of Masecup was described in 1711 as "now living or residing at Middletown or Glastonbury"⁵ (PRCC, Vol.5:213), which indicates a dual residency. Also, the time of year probably affected population count. For example, some family units may have moved inland to hunt for extended periods during the wintertime. Some Wangunk families may have lived off reservation bounds. An example of this is provided by Siana who allegedly resided at Siam dock (Bayne 1884:495), which was approximately a half mile upriver from the reservation. Therefore, a count of the Wangunk population at any given time would likely have been an estimate.

In 1725 Governor Talcott provided the following assessment of the Wangunk population: "At Mideltown thirty and two, at a place Called Wingogg on y^e east side of

the river of Connecticut by y^e river side" (Talcott 1896:397). In 1734 Rev. Treat attempted to count their population which he "had before Endeavored to do but Could not" (Talcott 1896: 483). This second attempt was made at "a Great dance, at which time I Supposed they would be together." He again failed to produce a statistic. Perhaps his task was confounded by the presence of Niantic and Mohegan Indians in attendance.

5.2 A Colonial Village is Founded

As previously stated, Middletown members began to utilize land at and about Wangunk by the 1660's. Farming and animal husbandry practices were undertaken here by Middletown residents who were willing to cross the Connecticut River on a regular basis. Stonequarrying was carried out on a limited basis nearby, and perhaps shipbuilding. The first permanent house was built on the river's east side in 1690 (Field 1819:54-55), where it stood alone for about a decade. But shortly after the eighteenth century opened, the Wangunks witnessed several Middletown settlers moving across the river to build their homes near the reservation.

In 1710 there were approximately ten families living within the area that would later become Chatham Parish or Chatham Village (Field 1819:54). Living on the river's east side may have provided easy access to cropland and other resources, but it was an inconvenience on the Sabbath. These families were accustomed to attending public worship on the river's west side (Field 1853:253). In 1714 thirty-one persons petitioned the General Court for parish privileges. This request was granted, creating the Society of East Middletown, also known as Middletown's Third Society. A simple meeting house

²⁷ Glastonbury, which separated from Wethersfield, was incorporated in 1693.

was built in 1716 at a location believed to be the southeast corner of the present William and High Streets (Van Beynum 1966:2), which would have placed it at the edge of reservation property. The new church was organized in 1721, which consisted of twenty-nine members who were probably recommended from the churches in Middletown's lower houses (First Society) or upper houses (Second Society) (Field 1853:254).

Middletown divided itself in the same fashion as other Connecticut Colony river towns to the north. The founding town proper existed on the river's west side, but later settlements on the east side would form their own church societies, eventually becoming incorporated as separate towns.

5.3 The Wangunks Under English Colonial Rule

Even though the Wangunks received their own tribal space, this did not translate into a freedom from colonial jurisdiction. Like other River Indian communities, they lived within the domain of the Colony of Connecticut.

The River Indians did not pay taxes or hold the status of town membership, but they were subject to penalties for transgressing colonial laws. As colonial and Native social spheres grew physically closer, the Connecticut Colony enforced its standards of behavior in what was increasingly becoming "their" space. In the late 1660's, Connecticut's legislature passed laws which rendered Indians accountable for unlawful deeds. Breaches of the Sabbath were strictly prohibited (PRCC, Vol.2:61). A simple act of "labor or play," if carried out within "English limits," was subjected to a fine of five shillings or, alternately, the stocks for one hour. Although such a penalty was consistent with Puritan culture at the time, it was certainly an alien imposition on local Native

culture. The Wangunks would not have fallen under weekly scrutiny until Middletown members established residences near the reservation in the early eighteenth century. Indians were also forbidden to commit murder upon colonists, or other Indians (PRCC, Vol.2:117). The Colony required Indian groups to carry out the execution of their own murderers, and if this was not done, the murderer was subject to apprehension by a civil officer for trial in court. The sale of liquor to Indians was banned twice (PRCC, Vol.2:119; PRCC, Vol.2:257), and the sale of powder and lead was regulated for some time (PRCC, Vol.2:119). Such legal precedents rendered the River Indians accountable parties under colonial law.

One activity that the colonial legislature strictly regulated was the purchase of Indian lands by the English. Theoretically, these transactions were only legal when passed through the legislature. An exception was granted to the Wangunks, however. This occurred in 1697 when the General Court granted permission “to any one of the inhabitants of Midletown to purchase of the Indians there inhabiting, claiming propriety of land in Wongunck meddowe, about one acre of grasse land in the said meddowe” (PRCC, Vol.4:212). The Wangunks were allowed to freely sell what meadowland they still retained, but it remained illegal to sell land on the reservation proper without “higher approval.”

Although the Wangunks were not allowed to participate in town votes, this does not necessarily mean that they were excluded from town events. In Rev. Treat’s statement, he mentions that on a particular Sabbath in 1734 he could not preach to the Wangunks as “they were gone to the Election.” On election day, each township choose its representatives in colonial government, and this was also the most important holiday

throughout Puritan New England (Earle 1898:225). It is not unlikely that the Wangunks had gone across the river to Middletown's First Society to join in the celebrations. The Wangunks were also involved in town road planning, when it involved reservation property. This is evidenced in 1728 when the Wangunk community was involved in a survey extending Bartlett Street east into the larger reservation tract. The survey team consisted of Middletown members William Cornwell and Nathaniel Savage, in addition to "Cuschoy in behalf of ye other Indians" (Sherrow 1999). A 1756 survey map of the reservation depicts at least three formal roads within the boundaries of the larger reservation tract (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.140). The laying out of these roads must have required Wangunk approval.

In 1725 all Indian tribes of Connecticut were placed under the care of the governor and council by enactment (DeForest 1853:343). Connecticut's large tribes were appointed guardians/overseers. This paid office was created, in theory, to assist in the management of a tribe's political and economic affairs, and serve as an interface with colonial government. No such officer was appointed to the Wangunks, but members of Middletown's government served in similar capacities toward the end of the reservation period. When Cushoy, a Wangunk community elder, fell sick in 1755, Middletown selectmen paid expenses to support him until his death (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 2nd Ser., Vol.2, Doc.120a, 121a, 122a; *Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.145). This support involved the provision of food, sundries, and the services of a local doctor. His aged, blind widow was also fell under their charge. From 1756 to 1785 committees were appointed by the Connecticut legislature to manage the sale of

Wangunk lands and reimburse Native claimants. But this will be explained in greater detail in Chapter 6.

5.4 The Wangunks and Land Ownership

Among the diverse categories of colonial records, land transactions provide the most numerous references to the Wangunk Indians and their reservation. Indian land transactions are often descriptive documents, containing bits and pieces of ethnographic information. The following section presents aspects of Wangunk ethnohistory gleaned from these land transactions, most of which are from the eighteenth century, as a collection. Both male and female Wangunks had the power to hold or sell land. Wangunk practices of landholding also appear to reflect a combination of both European and indigenous mental constructs. Land rights were not only sold to colonists, as they were also sold or transferred to other members of the Wangunk community.

Wangunk Meadow was a rich and fertile planting ground, attracting the attention of Middletown planters. They were eager to purchase this land directly from the Indian proprietors, but were required to conduct such business through the General Court. Two of the earliest recorded private land purchases at Wangunk were negotiated with Indian women. A deed dated March 1, 1692 records John Clark's purchase of a parcel of Wangunk meadowland from "Towne hash que sunch squa" (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:61). In May 1693, Captain White purchased a "smale parcell of land at Wongum" from the wife of Maussecup (PRCC, Vol.4:98).

In May 1697, the General Assembly granted Middletown residents permission to purchase one-acre increments of land in "Wongunck meddowe" directly from its Indian

proprietors (PRCC, Vol.4:212). These private Indian land purchases were cumbersome to execute, as they were typically under the jurisdiction of the General Court. However, the General Assembly recorded some land purchases from Wangunk Indians after the 1697 legislation. Perhaps the property in question was outside of the meadow or unequal to one acre and, therefore, would require recording. In May 1711 the General Assembly granted Joseph Hollister of Glastonbury permission to accept approximately two acres of land at Wangunk Meadow for the payment of a debt (PRCC, Vol.5:213). This exchange was petitioned by "Causchawet, Indian man, and his squaw, and of the Indian squaw, or widow of Mussecuppe, late a sachem, deceased, now living or residing at Middleton or Glassenbury..." What debt these Indians owed Hollister was not recorded.

It is interesting to note the appearance of the name "Cushoy," which enjoys numerous spellings, among Wangunk land deeds. This individual is involved in other early sales:

May 1713

Upon the petition of John Clark, junr, of Midleton, that certain Indians, named Siana, Cuschay, and Nannamaroos, living at said Midletown, may be impowred to make a legal conveyance of half an acre of meadow land in Midletown aforesaid, on the east side of the great river, within the meadow commonly called Wongunck, he having first obtained the towns liberty to purchase the same: This Assembly grants liberty to the abovesaid Indians to make a legal conveyance of the said land to John Clark abovenamed. (PRCC, Vol.5:366)

October 1715

Upon the petition of Daniel Clark of Middletown, this assembly grant him liberty to purchase about two acres of land of an Indian named Conschoy, which land lyeth on an island within said Midletown bounds, commonly called Wongung island. (PRCC, Vol.5:523)

Cushoy appeared in the early eighteenth century as a Wangunk land proprietor. Mohegan Indians bearing Cushoy as a surname served as councilors for Ben Uncas during the

1730's and 40's (Talcott 1896:40-45; Bates 1907:50), and perhaps the Cushoy at Wangunk was their relative.

Some Wangunks submitted genealogical information to Middletown authorities to secure their family land interests. The following information was entered into the *Middletown Land Records*, representing the interests of two families:

May 2nd 1726

Seuerl Indians desired a Record of their names & decent from the Indians which ware the propriators of Lands in Midletown Mamooson: fifty years old the 15th day of Last April son to kickemus and Sarah: his mother. daughter to Pewampskin & sunk^s squaw. Long Symon Son to Sarah aboue s^d 28 years old the 16th of Last march and his Son Symon born Nouemb^r 28th 1723 Peter Sanchuse: son to sarah aboue sd was: 33: years old : May 2^d 1726. as the s^d Indians gaue account to me

Joseph Rockwell Regist^r

James Sase pequan: Grandson to Old Bette
& Son to Debora old Bette^s Daughter born June 7th: 1719

James Sasepequan son to James Sase pequan born Sept. 22^d. 1747
(*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214)

During the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Wangunk's Indian proprietors incorporated European practices of land ownership, but still retained an indigenous concept of land rights.

In some contexts, Wangunks controlled the sale of specific land parcels on an independent basis. The following land transaction illustrates this point. A deed dated Jan. 18, 1730/31 records "Moses Indian" selling two parcels of land at Indian Hill to Thomas Wells of Glastonbury for a sum of eleven pounds (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.22:24). The boundary descriptions in this deed reveal that Indian Hill was divided into a patchwork of privately owned parcels:

...upon the place called the Indian Hills one piece Containing Three Acres & a butts South Upon land of Simon Indian. West upon unimproved lands East. & is Thirty Rods long North and South & Sixteen Rods Wide East & West, the Other piece Containing one Acre & is Thirty Rods long East & West & five Rods & one half Wide North & South & abutts North upon land of Jose Robin South upon Land belonging to One Penny Hannah West upon land which did belong to Peter Sanchews Deceased & east upon land of Coschawit an Indian...

A similar land deed demonstrates that this pattern still existed in 1640 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546). Thus, the Wangunks had incorporated European notions of private property ownership to a certain degree.

However, a notion of communal land ownership still operated, as demonstrated by a 1732 land sale to Moses Bartlett. Bartlett, who served as a reverend and physician in East Middletown (Field 1819:254), purchased forty acres within the larger reservation tract. This deed bore the mark of twenty Indians as follows: "Mamoson, Betty, Cuschoy, Moses Moxon, James, Charles Robbin, young Sean, Long Simon, young Betty, Sary, Mesooggosk, Shimmoon, Moses Comshot, Jacob, Tom Robbin, young squamp, Mukchoise, John Robbin, Metowhump, and Mequash hesk" (Bayne 1884:496).

Several land sales were transacted between Indians during the 1740's. Some of these sales probably represent the departure of resident Wangunks who were selling their land interests to other Wangunks. The earliest such deed is dated March 29, 1740 when "Tom Robin" sold "John Coschaw" a one and three quarter-acre parcel of land at Indian Hill for the sum of four pounds (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546). Several such deeds involve Ben Cushoy who purchased land rights on the reservation on five separate occasions, gaining rights over a large portion of property. He appears to fill a vacuum of

land ownership left by departing Wangunks. Ben Cushoy was likely a relative of Cushoy the sachem.

Ben Cushoy purchased his first land right at Wangunk on Oct. 16, 1741 from Tom Robin "a proprietor in Wangunk in Middletown" who was "now Residing at Hocanum in Hartford" (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546). For the sum of four pounds he received all of Tom Robin's:

...right title and Interest in one Certain piece of Land near Wongunk aforesaid Containing near two hundred acres in the whole be it more or Les butting on Sundry Lotments of Land Round Called Indian Land in the woods Separate from that which is Called Indian Hill by the River.

The described land constitutes the larger reservation tract, which was apparently wooded at the time.

Not all of Ben Cushoy's purchases refer to specific tracts or parcels. On two occasions he purchased nothing more than the collectively held right of a Wangunk land proprietor. English law does not quantify or attempt to describe this type of right in great detail, as it is a Native construct. On June 25, 1742 Ben Cushoy purchased, for the sum of four pounds, such a right from "Luse Numps," a proprietor who inherited it from his mother (*Middletown Land Records* Vol.10:546-547). This right was defined as all "the Said Luse had or ought to have had of in or to all & Every part of the Indian Land at or about Wongunk." On May 20, 1743 Ben Cushoy purchased another such right from "Tawomp" for three pounds, which was defined as "...all the Right title and Interest that I the S. Tawomp Indian had or ought to have had in any or all the Indian land at Wongunk" (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:547). The author does not fully understand what this

type of right this was, and perhaps the English language was not capable of fully capturing its meaning.

Ben Cushoy made two more land purchases, which probably involved specific parcels of land. On July 25, 1743 he purchased an unspecified quantity of land for four pounds from "James Peequon", a proprietor at Wangunk (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:547). The deed states that "James Peequon" is a son to "James Peequon" and a grandson to "Old Bette." On September 30, 1743 Ben Cushoy purchased land at Wangunk from "Isaac Robin" for fifty shillings (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:548). That was the last land purchase Ben Cushoy would make on the reservation. His ambition as a Wangunk land proprietor was cut short by his death in 1746. An inventory of his estate shows that his "five purchd Rightes in the Indian Land at Wongunk" were appraised at 21 pounds, while "his own Rights In the Indian Land" were appraised at 5 pounds (transcribed in Hermes 1999:166-167; *Probate Packets, Hartford, 1641-1800*, microfilm reel #568, roll no. 1530). Perhaps Ben Cushoy's "own Rights" at Wangunk were inherited through family.

There were two more recorded land transactions between Indians following Ben Cushoy's death. They both involve an Indian named James Sasepequon, who took an interest in acquiring reservation land rights at mid-century. On March 20, 1749, Mamooson, a proprietor of Wangunk land, made the following grant:

...unto James Sassepeckquin Indian Son to James Sassepeckquin formerly a proprietor in said Indian Land Deceasd...a Certain piece or percel of said Indian Land, Lying Joyning to a Small piece which I have Lately Lett out to Deacon Whites two Sons for Six years, and the Said James to fence and Clear if he pleases from that Land Northward up as farr as the plain cart path & as farr westward as he thinks best if my Right will Carry him So Farr; and to have and to hold the Same for him Self and his heirs as long

as my Right Shall be held to be good. (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.13:612)

This deed was witnessed by "old betty" and "young betty," and the described land was within the larger reservation tract. James Sasepequon also acquired land at Indian Hill. On April 24, 1751 "Coschowe Indian" sold him one acre at Indian Hill for fifteen pounds (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.13:187). This marked the end of land transactions between Indians on the reservation. All later land transfers were part of the reservation's dissolution by Middletown authorities.

Thus, the Wangunks left a significant documentary "fingerprint" in the form of land transactions. These documents indicate that both male and female Wangunks had the power to hold or sell land, and their landholding practices reflect a combination of both European and indigenous mental constructs.

5.5 Missionary Efforts in Central Connecticut

During the 1730's ministers undertook efforts to convert Central Connecticut's Indians to the Christian religion and English lifestyle, focusing on the Wangunk, Hockanum, and Farmington Indian communities.

In 1734 Rev. Richard Treat labored as a missionary among the Wangunks. Richard Treat was born in 1694 and raised on his father's farm at Nayaug in Glastonbury. His father, Thomas Treat, was a skilled Indian interpreter who served as a deputy to the General Court and as a Lieutenant during Queen Anne's War (Stiles 1904 Vol.2:711-712). Thomas Treat's written will requested that his son, Richard, receive a college education, and this request was carried out. After graduating from Yale College in 1719

Rev. Richard Treat preached in several southern New England towns (Talcott 1896:478-9 *note*).

Rev. Treat preached to Wangunk community members from December 1734 to June 1735 (Talcott 1896:478-484). He undertook this endeavor with encouragement from other ministers in Central Connecticut. Rev. Treat instructed a group of twelve to fourteen children in the English language and religion on a weekly basis. He abandoned his efforts after four months, discouraged by slow progress, impending family obligations, and an apparent lack of missionary society support. But later that summer he attended a Wangunk "Great dance" in an attempt to assess their population on behalf of Governor Talcott and missionary society commissioners. Rev. Treat composed a statement detailing his experiences with the Wangunks in 1737. This statement is the most ethnographically rich source of information about the Wangunks known to the author, despite its cultural biases. Therefore, the entire document is transcribed for the reader to consider (**Appendix D**).

The society which Rev. Treat appealed to for advice and funding was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) (Talcott 1892:314, 315 *note*), the missionary arm of the Church of England. The SPG in New England, directed by commissioners at Boston, promoted the conversion of Connecticut's Indians.

An effort to convert the Hockanum Indians appears in SPG records. In 1734 Rev. Samuel Woodbridge of the Third Church of Hartford,²⁸ appealed to the SPG for guidance in the instruction of local Indians (Talcott 1896:480 *note*). Indian families "in his

²⁸ The Third Church of Hartford would later become incorporated as the town of East Hartford.

Neighborhood"²⁹ expressed an interest in attending public worship at the meetinghouse and a willingness to learn to read. However, Rev. Woodbridge related that these Indians "pretend want of cloathing as a reason for their neglect." The SPG granted "Ten Blankets and Twenty Primers" to be distributed among those Indians who would attend church and receive instruction in reading.

Beginning in 1732, Rev. Samuel Whitman of Farmington instructed Tunxis youth in English grammar, religion, and manner. The SPG provided missionary funding for Rev. Whitman's endeavors. In May 1733, New England's SPG treasurer noted the exemplary progress of an eighteen year old youth who was expected to become a "Minister to the Indians" (Talcott 1892:283-284). The following winter, Rev. Whitman was progressing with the instruction of nine boys (Talcott 1892:298-299). Three could read in the Testament, three could read in the Psalter, and three were in their primers. Three of them had also begun writing, one with "a legible hand". Whitman appealed for further funding through the renewal of an expired General Assembly act that provided for the education of Indians. Thus, his funding appears to have been drawn largely from the Colony of Connecticut. In these early days, the Indian youths were instructed at the town school among the other English children and boarded in English homes during the winter season. During the years of 1733, 1734, and 1736 appropriations were ordered from the public treasury for "dieting of the Indian lads at 4 shillings per week for the time they attend the school in said town" (Porter 1886: 170).

²⁹ The author presumes that Rev. Woodbridge is referring to the Hockanum Indians of East Hartford.

In Sept. 1737 ten to eighteen Indian youths were being instructed at Farmington. The Indians had built their own schoolhouse where an Indian named John Mettawan³⁰ had instructed them for two months. Mettawan may have been the promising eighteen-year-old previously noted by Rev. Whitman. In Jan. 1737/8 Gov. Talcott noted that "John Tawump the Indian Christian" had made good progress, and ordered the "lesser children" to be "schooled at ye English schole, and boarded by the English, all at the expence of this Coloney, as they have been several winters past" (Talcott 1896:39). John Mettawan served as schoolmaster into the 1740's.³¹ Rev. Whitman died in 1751 and was succeeded by Rev. Timothy Pitkin who continued his work among the Indians (Love 1899:202). In 1751 the Christianized Indians of Farmington were granted liberty to build themselves a seat in the town meeting house (Porter 1886:170).

Thus, with the efforts of local ministers, the seeds of Christianity were being planted among Central Connecticut's Indians. The pursuit of Christian knowledge would come to serve as a powerful vector for regional interaction in later years, fortifying the bonds between many of southern New England's Indian communities.

5.6 The Wangunk Community Diaspora

During the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Wangunk's resident Indian population largely dissolved. In 1725 their population was recorded as 32 (Talcott 1896:397), and a significant population still existed in 1734 during Rev. Treat's

³⁰ Also spelled "John Tawump". Perhaps he is a relative of Wangunk land proprietor "Tawomp" (also spelled "Metowhump") who signs a 1743 deed with a mark.

³¹ According to a Connecticut muster roll, "John Wetowamp" died on January 12, 1746 while serving on an expedition to Louisburg (Bates 1911:78).

missionary efforts. However, by mid-century only a few Indian residents remained. Indian to Indian land sales from the 1740's seem to confirm the departure of resident Wangunks during this period. The Society of East Middletown was planning to build their second meeting house near the center of reservation land, which had been largely abandoned in the wake of a community diaspora. It appears that most Wangunks who left the reservation joined other Indian communities.

In 1764 a public record indicates that approximately forty heirs to Wangunk land "have dispersed themselves, some among the Mohegans, some to Farmington, others to Hartford and New Hartford" (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321). These were all places where Indian communities existed. The Mohegans occupied a reservation that they still occupy today in Montville, Connecticut. Farmington's Tunxis community occupied a reservation at "Indian Neck" on the Farmington River.

Within the bounds of Hartford, there appears to have been at least two Indian communities. The Saukiaug community's land base in Hartford's South Meadow was reserved in 1663 (Hoadly 1897:141), and its residential community persisted into the second quarter of the eighteenth century. In 1725, Gov. Talcott recorded "At Hartford about 40 Nigh ye South Side of ye town in ye Meadow" (Talcott 1896:402). Historians concur that the remainder of this community removed to Farmington, where they were assimilated into the Tunxis community (Love 1935:97). The author suspects this occurred during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. A few Indians probably continued to reside at Hockanum, or present day East Hartford. DeForest claims that a community persisted there until at least 1745, but disappeared by 1760 (DeForest

1853:363), while a local history records the presence of a wigwam³² there as late as 1775-1780 (Goodwin 1879:37 *note*). At least one Wangunk appears to have relocated his residence to Hockanum. According to a 1741 land deed, a Wangunk land proprietor named Tom Robin was "now residing at Hockanum in Hartford" (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546).

Historians claim that two Indian communities existed near the junction of the east and west branches of the Farmington River, within the Bounds of New Hartford (Crofut 1937 Vol.1:411; Hale & Case 1886:67). One was located at "Indian Hill," and the other at "Satan's Kingdom." According to tradition, the Satan's Kingdom community was "a heterogeneous settlement of renegade Indians, Negroes, and whites" (Crofut 1937 Vol.1:411), who inhabited the place in the last years of the eighteenth century (Phillips 1992:131). The New Hartford Indians and early Connecticut settlers experienced some degree of cultural interaction. This is attested to by the baptism of thirteen Indians in 1743/44 under the authority of New Hartford's First Congregational Church (*Connecticut Church Records, State Library Index. New Hartford, First Cong. 1739-1854:126*)

Farmington's Tunxis community also received immigrants from the Quinnipiacs of New Haven. By 1759 a small number of Quinnipiac families had already left New Haven and settled among the Farmington Indians (Menta 1994:339-340), and by 1774 the majority of Quinnipiacs had followed (Menta 1994:345). The Farmington community's acceptance of both Wangunks and Quinnipiacs demonstrates the persistence of inter-community bonds in eighteenth century Central Connecticut.

³² Wigwams are traditional Algonkian dwellings.

The dispersal of Wangunks among other Indian communities demonstrates that they were part of a larger social system. The Wangunk community did not migrate in a single group movement; its members dispersed and reintegrated themselves within the larger Native social system. As Wangunks took up residence among other communities they ensured their survival as a Native people.

5.7 A Growing Village Covets Wangunk Land

As the mid-eighteenth century approached, the population of east Middletown was rapidly expanding. During the years of 1741 and 1742 the Society of East Middletown experienced its greatest religious revival, and thirty-one new members were added to the church (Bayne 1877:11). Each new member probably represented a family unit.

As membership increased, the first meetinghouse became inadequate, and in 1746 the Society's members voted to build a new one (Bayne 1877:11). In October 1748 the Society selected the dimensions of the future meeting house, and decided to appeal to the General Assembly to determine the placement of the structure (Bayne 1877:13). The General Assembly sent a committee that assigned a location, however, the Society was not pleased and a second appeal was made. The General Assembly sent a second committee which "set the stake" for the new meeting house. Curiously enough, this stake was placed within the larger reservation tract. In 1750 the Society requested permission from Middletown to purchase three acres of land from the Wangunks encompassing this stake, and chose Deacon David Sage as an agent to execute this land purchase. Middletown granted permission for these activities. The buyers were instructed to

purchase three acres if the price was fifteen pounds per acre, or, otherwise, purchase one acre if the price was higher (Sherrow 2000). The Society purchased only one acre, as the Wangunks sold it at eighteen pounds. The new meetinghouse was built on the assigned location that year (Field 1819:256).

The reservation tract, known as Indian Hill, became a target of colonial industry. This piece of upland rolls steeply into the Connecticut River, resulting in a deep berth. Colonial entrepreneurs were attracted to this location. The first may have been Giles Hall, a mariner, entrepreneur, and shipbuilder who owned properties along the Connecticut River and a shipyard in Middle Haddam (Loether et al. 1980:17). In 1716 the General Assembly granted this Middletown resident permission to purchase land from the "Indians at Wongung" (PRCC, Vol.5:556). He probably built his house near Indian Hill shortly after 1717 (Loether et al. 1980:17). He was given the task of planning a road through Wangunk Meadow, and may have used it to transport materials for shipbuilding along the river's edge. Hall sold his house in 1739.

Immediately thereafter, another shipbuilder named George Lewis Sr. began working in the Indian Hill area (Loether et al. 1980:17). His first product was a schooner of 90 tons launched in October 1740 (Field 1853:260). George Lewis, Sr. and his descendents constructed ships there for three generations until the Lewis Yard was sold to Sylvester Gildersleeve in 1838 (Loether et al. 1980:17-20). The shipbuilding contracts secured by the Lewis' called for the labors of carpenters, joiners, and caulkers. A local blacksmith named Job Bates illegally built his house on the Indian Hill tract (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141), and probably provided some labor for the Lewis Yard (Loether et al. 1980:16-17). Between contracts, other labors such as

agriculture and quarrying were available to those involved in the shipbuilding industry. The dynamics of the shipbuilding industry helped shape what was becoming Chatham Village.

Approximately one mile south of Indian Hill, another industry emerged along the Connecticut River's edge. A massive outcrop of fine brown sandstone was being quarried, generally destined to become building material and gravestones. This stone, known as "Portland freestone," had been quarried on a small scale since the mid-seventeenth century, and had been the property of Middletown since 1665 (Field 1853:626). Middletown allowed John Stancliff, the first settler on the river's east side (ca. 1690), to build his house upon these rocks (Bayne 1884:516). This was due, in part, to his service as a stone mason for the building of the town's chimneys. But in 1726 quarrying rights became accessible to the private sector. That year town selectmen were empowered to lease quarrying rights to individuals (Bayne 1884:516). Freestone quarrying would become an industrial magnet, drawing more settlers to the river's east side.

This growing village was one of many along the banks of the Connecticut River during this time period. The land secured by the original seventeenth century townships was being used on an increasingly intensive scale by developing village communities. The original town proprietors had passed their land holdings on to their sons and grandsons, who typically raised large families. Both agrarian and industrial activities were on the rise in the local colonial culture. In Middletown the ever-increasing colonial appetite for land and resources generated pressures to dissolve Wangunk landholdings.

CHAPTER 6—Dissolution of the Wangunk Reservation, ca. 1750-1785

6.0 Introduction

By the mid-eighteenth century Wangunk had been largely abandoned by its Indian inhabitants. Most community members had left the reservation to live at Mohegan, Farmington, Hartford, and New Hartford. Middletown's Third Society continued to grow as a farming community, and local industries gained momentum. After the second meetinghouse was constructed, the Third Society wished to dissolve Wangunk landholdings. Middletown authorities pressed this cause through the legal system and dissolved the reservation land base. During this lengthy process several parties stepped forward to identify themselves as the rightful owners.

This process was set into legal motion with the submission of a petition dated May 14, 1754 (*Connecticut Archives, Ecclesiastical Affairs, 1658-1789*, 1st Ser., Vol.9, Doc. 287). Jabez Hamlin Esq. petitioned the General Assembly as an agent for Middletown's Third Society. He explained that the Wangunks own a significant portion of underutilized property, which cannot be legally purchased or settled on by Middletown members according to current law. He also stated that the Indian proprietors are "willing and Desirous" to sell their reservation land and that Middletown members are eager to purchase it.

6.1 Negotiations with Cushoy

The first Wangunk to participate in the forthcoming land negotiations was Cushoy. A primary document source states that this individual was recognized as the sachem of the Wangunks (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.232-233). By 1756 he was the only male living at Wangunk, and had become aged and infirm. In May 1756 five Middletown selectmen submitted a letter and expense account to the General Assembly, demonstrating that they had supported Cushoy since July of 1755 and were owed compensation (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 2nd Ser., Vol.2, Doc.120a, 121a, 122a). The expense account lists a variety of supplies including a wool shirt, green corn, indian corn, meal, bread, codfish, shad, mutton, pork, veal, beef, and tobacco. Cushoy's debt totaled 59 pounds, 2 shillings, and 51 pence. The letter also explains that Cushoy owns much "unimproved" land near the meetinghouse, and requests that he pay his debt in land, if not in pounds, in the amount stated.

The Native social system that would have supported this elder apparently dissolved with its residential population. It is not unlikely that Cushoy was manipulated into a state of debt by town agents as a ploy to secure Wangunk land. Cushoy's debt was clearly being used as a legal axe to obtain the reservation land base.

The reservation property was described in a petition submitted to the General Assembly by inhabitants of Middletown's Third Society in May 1756 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.130-131). The larger tract was approximately "two hundred" acres in the center of the society where the meetinghouse was located. The smaller tract was approximately "fifty" acres on the "Great River" at a place useful for shipping. According to town agents, the Wangunks were "almost all dead and

dispersed" and Cuschoy was anxious to sell the land. The General Assembly appointed a committee to investigate this matter, consisting of Col. John Chester, Col. Thomas Welles, and Col. Elisur Goodrich.

In September 1756 surveyor William Welles produced a map of the Wangunk reservation (**Appendix H**) and a survey report with boundary descriptions (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.139-140). The author has constructed a key to many of the features depicted on this map (see **Appendix I**).

In October the committee submitted a report on the circumstances of reservation land and its owners to the General Assembly (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.132). Cushoy is described as being over seventy years old. According to the report, Cushoy was "willing and desirous" that reservation land be sold to the English and revenues be transferred to himself, and any other Indians with a just claim. Cushoy related "there were not more than 12 or 13 besides himself that were Descendants from the original Indian Prop[rietors]" and that "they were so dispersed that they could not be found without great Difficulty." The committee recommended that the land be sold in small parcel allotments for the English to improve. The larger tract of land surrounding the meetinghouse is described as valuable and "not Improved." Indian Hill's economic value is also addressed. The report states that this tract:

...lies upon the great River & is very commodious place for Building of Vesels and the Water being deep there, and very Shallow Just above & at certain Seasons of the year not Navigable but by Small Vesels might in time be very Servicable for Building Storehouses and Landing & unloading Vesels of Burth[].

Middletown members viewed Indian Hill as a valuable location for shipping and shipbuilding, and wished to secure all rights to the area.

These negotiations with Cushoy marked the beginning of the Wangunk reservation's dissolution. Although Cushoy related that other Wangunk land claimants could not be easily located, many would come forth in the near future to state their claims in this affair.

6.2 Negotiations with Richard Ranney

The following year, another Indian claimant came to light. Richard Ranney, of Newtown, submitted a petition to the General Assembly concerning his land rights at Wangunk in April 1757 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.133). He is identified as "the only Son of One of the Daughters & CoHeirs of Doctor Robbin, the last Sachem of the Middletown Indians." Ranney is characterized in the petition:

That your memorialist having been bred entirely among the English, & learned to write & Read English hath been Baptized, & is a professor of the Christian Faith in which he humbly Hopes by divine assistance to live & Die, & having been taught the Joiner's Trade doth altogether asociate himself & dwell with the English, & fully purposes as he hath been thus Educated to live & behave according to the English Customs & Manners, and in all things to be subject to the Laws of this Colony.

Ranney wished to have a portion of land set aside for himself, including a proper English title. He hoped to live there and improve it in the English manner. This petition bears his signature.

This petition indicates that Richard Ranney was living within the bounds of Newtown at the time of its submission. Newtown is located in the Housatonic Valley and was settled by Connecticut colonists in the early eighteenth century. Newtown land records indicate that Indians occupied a reserved tract on the Housatonic River during the first half of the eighteenth century (Boyle 1945:9). It is unclear whether Richard Ranney

had ever associated with these Indians. The language of the petition suggests that he considered himself to be a part of colonial society, and perhaps his labors as a joiner contributed toward development in colonial Newtown. Ranney is the surname of a Middletown family, and Richard Ranney may have been raised in one of their households. In fact, the Ranney's owned and occupied a tract of land adjacent to Indian Hill.

In May the General Assembly appointed a two-person committee to investigate Richard Ranney's land claim, consisting of John Chester and Thomas Welles Esq. (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.134a). However, the committee did not immediately carry out its assigned task. The committee members were "unavoidably prevented" from their task and "reappointed" for the same purpose in October (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.134b).

The committee completed its investigation and submitted its report to the General Assembly in May 1758 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.135). The report states that Richard Ranney is indeed a descendant of "Robbin," one of the original proprietors of the reservation, and is the "most deserving Person of any of the S. Claimants." The deed of 1675 is cited, demonstrating that Robin was one of the thirteen original proprietors. The committee recommended that Ranney be granted a ten-acre tract east of the meetinghouse, and included proposed boundary measurements. The committee's recommendation was accepted and approved. This agreement also permitted Ranney to cultivate Indian lands adjoining his ten acres until "some other of the descendants of said Indians claimants of said land appear and make out their claim and title to said lands."

Richard Ranney's land claim was well received by colonial authorities, who looked well upon his incorporation into English colonial society. He would not be the last Wangunk to actively pursue his Native land interests. Many other Wangunks living away from the reservation would come forth in the near future to state their claims. Most of them appear to have been Christian Indians involved in the Brotherton Movement.

6.3 Christian Indians and the Brotherton Movement

As the Wangunk reservation was being dissolved, some of its former residents became involved in a social movement known as the Brotherton Movement. This social movement promoted the abandonment of local Native territories for new settlement opportunities on western lands.

By the 1770's the Christian faith had become a powerful vector for social networking among many Indians of southern New England. The growth of Christianity among many of these Indians is rooted in a movement called the Great Awakening, a religious revival that spread throughout colonial New England during the early 1740's. The Great Awakening came, in part, "as a protest against the departure of eighteenth century Congregationalism from its former ideals" (Vos 1967:345). The leaders of this movement, known as the "New Lights," sought to establish a stronger and more personal emotional connection with God. This movement revitalized Indian missionary activities, which were undertaken by some New Light ministers (Vos 1967:346). The most influential of these ministers was Eleazar Wheelock, whose dedication to the conversion of Indian youths would have a powerful influence on the future of local Indian communities.

A key institution that would influence the future of local Indians was Wheelock's Indian Charity School (Love 1899:56-57). Rev. Wheelock organized this school which operated in Lebanon, Connecticut from 1754-1770. He sought to gather the most promising youth from surrounding Indian communities so they could receive a Christian education in mutual acquaintance. Girls were admitted, as well as boys, and instructed in domestic concerns. After years of seasoning, these students were intended to return to their communities and introduce others to Christianity through example and leadership.

During the 1770's, a social movement developed among the Christian Indians of southern New England known as the Brotherton Movement, or Brotherton Emigration. Much of the social momentum behind this emigration was harnessed and organized by Sampson Occum, a Mohegan convert of the Great Awakening who became an itinerant preacher. In 1771 Rev. Wheelock proposed to Sampson Occum that he and David Fowler, another Indian preacher, should emigrate with their families to become teachers among the Six Nations³³ (Love 1899:207). Occum did not immediately accept this proposition, but considered the concept of a westward migration as a possible future for the Christian Indians of southern New England.

The idea of emigration spread among many Christian Indian families who would eventually move to New York State. These families wanted to relocate, in part, to remove themselves from the corrupting influences of the mixed colonial society surrounding them (Love 1899:207-208). They also needed a larger land base to support themselves through agriculture, as their reservation territories were reaching a critically

³³ The Six Nations consisted of the Iroquois Confederacy (Five Nations) and the Tuscarora tribe.

low mass on sometimes-marginal lands. Through a combination of Christian ideals, agriculture, and communal separatism these families planned to live a better life.

In 1774 the Oneidas² formed a treaty with the New England Indians, deeding them land at what was to become Brotherton (Love 1889:221-222). The grantees were a coalition of Indian communities at "Mohegan Naraganset Montock, Pequods of Groton and of Stonington, Nahantick, Farmington, Inhabiting within New England Governments." This coalition was a manifestation of a larger social system. The Brotherton Movement crystallized out of the regional interaction system that already interconnected the Indians of southern New England. A shared dedication to Christian ideals among many Indians revitalized social bonds between the scattered, shrinking Indian communities. Wangunks living away from the reservation became involved in the Brotherton Movement, as evidenced in **Appendix K**.

6.4 Group Land Claims Reveal a People in Motion

Following negotiations with Cushoy and Richard Ranney, groups of Wangunk proprietors petitioned the General Assembly, representing their land interests. These were among the "dispersed" Indians alluded to by Cushoy in a previous petition. Some had received an English education and were practicing Christians who took an interest in the Brotherton Movement. These Indians agreed to have the reservation divided and sold, as they planned futures for themselves elsewhere.

In October of 1760, two Middletown members submitted a petition in conjunction with several Wangunks living away from the reservation (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*,

1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141). According to the petition, the reservation had been "left useless" by its Indian owners and was obstructing settlement by Middletown members:

...in Middletown aforesaid on the east Side of Connecticut River there is about Two hundred acres of land that the proprietors of Middleton formerly Granted or Sequestered for the uses and improuement of the Indians when there was no Inhabitants or very few English people Lived on that Side of the Riuer in Said Town which Said Land is Situate in the Middle of Said Society Near the Meeting House in the 3^d Society in Middletown and the Ship yard & Landing place which Said Land very much Incommodes that Society & obstructs the Setling of the people of the English...

The Third Society wished to purchase approximately twenty acres of reservation land from its Indian proprietors, in exchange for other unspecified land. A committee was requested to assist the Indians in the sale of their lands. This petition bears the marks of six Indians, only one of whom is male: "Samuel Robbin, Moll Wife of Sam, Thankfull Cushoy, Susannah Pochomogue, Hannah Mamanash, Prudence Hubban." The General Assembly granted this committee.

The General Assembly was again petitioned in May 1762 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.143). This group requested that the reservation land be sold, and the avails divided among the proprietors according to their respective rights. This petition bears the following signatures: "*Samuel Ashbo, Gideon Comm[shot], Sam Robin, James Cusk, David Towsey.*"

In October 1764 the General Assembly responded to a petition submitted by five Middletown selectmen "and others of the 3d society" (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321). It was acknowledged that the Wangunk reservation was granted to twelve Indians in 1675. The heirs of these original proprietors are described as "being now about forty men, women

³⁴ The Oneidas inhabited part of what is now New York State and belonged to the Six Nations.

and children, and have dispersed themselves, some among the Mohegans, some to Farmington, others to Hartford and New Hartford." It was also noted that some of these heirs were "christianized." The only remaining Indian residents were one squaw and three of her children, in addition to Cushoy's blind wife who had been supported by Middletown selectmen for over twelve months. Some reservation land had been let out by Indians since deceased, while other parts had been encroached upon. The General Assembly appointed a committee to inquire into these circumstances and present a report in May of the following year. This three-person committee consisted of John Chester, Elisha Williams and James Wasdworth Jr. Esq.

In May 1765, the committee presented its report (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.145). This report represented the interests of Middletown selectmen and Samuel Ashpo "an Indian, for himself, and agent for sundry Indians, proprietors of land in Midletown at a place called Wongunk," many of whom were "Civilized and Christianized" and settled in other places. Facts pertaining to the reservation's land history are reviewed. Of the reservation's original three hundred acres, only about two hundred remained. This reduction in reservation land base is attributed to previous small parcel sales and leasing by Wangunks, in addition to encroachment by town members.

Town selectmen claimed they supported the late "Tom Cuschoy" before he died (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.145). In his final days of sickness Cushoy was cared for by Dr. Aaron Roberts, who was never compensated for his efforts. The selectmen were still supporting Cushoy's aged, blind wife and her current debt was 21 pounds and 15 shillings. Aside from her, only "one squaw and two or three children" continued to live on reservation land.

The committee recommended that the land be sold for the benefit of both the society and the Indian proprietors under the following conditions (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.145). The committee would ascertain the proportion of land each claimant would receive. If the owners chose to sell their land, the committee would oversee the process. The avails would first be used to pay outstanding debts to Middletown selectmen and Dr. Aaron Roberts. Some land would be temporarily set aside and held by the committee in case other Indian claimants came forth during this process. The committee was also trusted with the responsibility to "save for the use of such of them as incline to live on said land a sufficient quantity thereof for that purpose." The General Assembly approved of these recommendations and appointed a committee to carry them out.

The May 1765 committee report was accompanied by a petition subscribed by the "Indians of the Tribe of Wongunck in metabesett alias Midletown" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146). They requested a committee to preside over these land claims, directing the process of sales and compensation. They also requested the option to have their share of lands set aside for private ownership. One family's land claims received special mention, "that made by the wobinhams in Right of old wobinham who was of S. Tribe." All of the males provide signatures while all of the females provide marks: "Samuel Ashpo, Hannah Mamanash, Gideon Comm[shot], James Wowowous, Samuel Adams, Moses Sanch[use], Naorni Wobinham, Hannah Squamp alias Wam[], Ann Cochepins".

In October 1771 the selectmen of Middletown and Chatham³⁵ submitted a petition to the General Assembly in regard to a debt. They wished to be compensated for their support of "Tike alias Mary Cuschoy indian Squaw of the Tribe & Relict of Cuschoy indian Sachem of the Tribe" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.232-233). The debt totaled 70 pounds, and the selectmen wished to be reimbursed through the avails of Wangunk land. The Middletown selectmen's share was 18 pounds, 11 shillings while the Chatham selectmen's share was 51 pounds, 13 shillings. The General Assembly approved this request and ordered payment in May 1772. The committee currently overseeing the sale of Wangunk land would pay out these monies.

The land sale and reimbursement process continued into the 1780's, under the supervision of this three-person committee. In May 1784, the General Assembly appointed Capt. Samuel William Williams to replace Col. Elisha Williams, deceased. Capt. Williams was instructed to "Collect the money due for the Indian land sold at Chatham and to pay out the same to the proprietors and to have the same authority in that case as said Col. Williams deceased had" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.234).

The last General Assembly record pertaining to Wangunk land is a petition dated May 1785 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.236). This petition was submitted by two of the committee members, James Wadsworth Esq. and Samuel William Williams. As of that date, the committee had helped "dispose of certain lands called Wangwunk Lands, which were the property of a Number of Indians formerly

³⁵ In 1767 East Middletown became a separate town named Chatham.

inhabitants of this State." ³⁶ They provided an update on the status of proceeds from the land sales. 100 pounds had not yet been collected from purchasers, and 163 pounds, 19 shillings in Continental Bills were in the committee's possession. They requested instruction on how to proceed with the reimbursement of Indian proprietors. They also wanted to know if any portion of the money should be retained to satisfy any future claims that could be made.

The General Assembly resolved to appoint a new committee in the stead of the former, consisting of Col. John Chester, Col. Howell Woodbridge and Capt. Samuel W. Williams (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.235). They were instructed to collect and pay over all of the money arising from the sale of reservation land to the proprietors or their heirs, "reserving a reasonable compensation for their Trouble and expence."

Thus, the Wangunk reservation dissolved in the face of colonial pressures and communal abandonment. Its community members chose futures for themselves elsewhere, and were willing to sell their land. Wangunk fell to the wayside, fading in importance as a place of the Native landscape.

6.5 The Wangunks as a Dispersed People

This section discusses social networking among the Wangunks during the eighteenth century. As their original reservation was dissolved, they remained part of a larger social system involving several Native communities, which ensured survival away from the place known as Wangunk.

³⁶ This likely refers to Wangunks who had left Connecticut during the Movement Brotherton.

During their community diaspora, which appears to have generally occurred during the second quarter of the eighteenth century, most Wangunks joined other Indian communities. As of 1764, they were residing at Mohegan, New Hartford, Hartford, and Farmington, and numbered “about forty men, women, and children” (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321).

Their sachem, Cushoy, appears to have been abandoned by his community, and, in his convalescence, he eventually fell under the charge of Middletown selectmen. As of 1765 the only Wangunks left on the reservation were Cushoy’s aged, blind wife, one squaw, and two or three children. Cushoy’s wife also fell under the charge of Middletown selectmen in her convalescence. The debts incurred by Cushoy and his wife were used as legal axes by Middletown selectmen to obtain reservation land. It is interesting to note that town selectmen identified Cushoy as sachem of the community (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.232-233), while Richard Ranney identified Robin as the “last true sachem” (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.133). This suggests that a political division existed within the community, which may have been a push factor in the diaspora.

Most Wangunks capitalized on social connections which allowed them to disperse and reintegrate within a larger Native social system. The author's biographical sketches (**Appendix K**) depict various community affiliations among Wangunk land claimants, which provides further documentary support for their diaspora and reintegration. As the Wangunks joined other Native communities they took on new "nested" identities, but still retained an association with the community, and place, known as Wangunk.

An interesting example of social reintegration can be seen in Samuel Adams and his wife, Hannah Squamp. In 1765 they were among several who subscribed a petition to the General Assembly as members of "the Tribe of Wongunck in metabesett alias Midletown" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146). Samuel Adams was a Farmington Indian by residence and a Quinnipiac Indian by descent. However, his wife, Hannah Squamp, was a Wangunk. His marriage to Hannah Squamp appears to have entitled him to an identity as a Wangunk land proprietor, even if only by a right secured through marriage. Thus, the petition indicates that Samuel Adams and his wife identify themselves with both the Wangunk and Tunxis communities. Samuel Adams eventually emigrated with the Brotherton Indians, taking on yet another community affiliation. This example illustrates how the Wangunks, and other Indians of Central Connecticut, took on what could be termed "nested identities" (McMullen 2000) as they reintegrated themselves within the larger Native social system.

Some Wangunk land claimants became involved in the Brotherton Movement, known ones being Moses Sanchuse, James Wowowous, David Robin, Samuel Adams, and probably his wife Hannah. This movement crystallized out of the regional interaction system that already interlinked the Indians of southern New England. A growing dedication to the Christian faith appears to have revitalized the bonds between Indian communities, at least for the community members who practiced this faith. This social cohesion enabled the Brotherton Indians to emigrate westward in a collective movement, pursuing a better future as a Native people in the face of colonialism. The Wangunks who were noted in 1785 as "formerly inhabitants of this State" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.236) had departed with this group.

By the later half of the eighteenth century, the nature of social networking among Central Connecticut's Indians had changed to a certain degree. The Native religious institutions that previously drew communities together, such as powows, were being replaced with Christian institutions. Christian Indians were bonded to one another through their new faith. Perhaps the role of the shaman was eclipsed by that of the Native itinerant preacher or the schoolmaster, who also held the power to socially connect people. Shared experiences during military service in the French and Indian War may also have provided new opportunities for men to form social bonds with one another. Polygynous marriages, which interconnected communities in the seventeenth century, were likely absent among Central Connecticut's Christian Indians as new social restrictions were adopted. Nonetheless, intercommunity bonds forged by social elites in the seventeenth century had probably resulted in a long lasting social network in the region. So although the social structures of marriage and religion had been altered since the seventeenth century, social networks remained intact.

CHAPTER 7–Wangunk in a Regional Social Context

7.0 Introduction

Now that a historical context and ethnohistory of the Wangunk community has been provided, they will be examined within a regional social context. This involves exploring the experiences of other communities in the Central Connecticut social region, and comparing them to Wangunk's.

To illustrate Wangunk's nature as a socially connected entity, the following methodology is employed. The intraregional and extraregional social connections held between the Wangunk community and other Indian communities are presented. For every social connection identified between Wangunk and another community, an asterisk (*) is inserted in the text. These social connections over space are considered "threads", which can occur in the form of migration, dual residency, kinship ties, political alliance, intercommunity landholding or visitation. In the concluding section (Chapter 7.4) these social threads are combined to form the graphic titled "Wangunk Web of Social Interaction ca. 1670-1780," which is the author's concrete expression of Wangunk as a socially connected entity.

The social web will illustrate a basic truth about the nature of Wangunk as a community; that it was not a socially bounded entity, but rather, an entity socially interfaced with other communities throughout its known history. The regional perspective will help illustrate another basic truth about Wangunk as a community. The

Wangunks did not “disappear” as popular history might recall, they simply reintegrated among other groups, surviving as a Native people. It appears that the Wangunks’ social connections facilitated their reintegration among other Native communities.

7.1 Intraregional Social Context

This section explores what is known about other Indian communities in the Central Connecticut social region, and their social experiences. Unfortunately, there are no comprehensive ethnohistoric works for referencing, and some communities have little existing documentation. Therefore, the author has constructed vignettes of Wangunk’s contemporaries, mainly from historic documents and literature. These are intended to provide a basic familiarity with other communities in this social region. These vignettes also place a secondary focus on the identification of social connections held with the Wangunk community, as indicated by an asterisk. All of these communities are depicted on the map titled “Communities of the Central Connecticut social region in the mid-seventeenth century” (**Appendix F**).

It should be noted that the communities addressed in this section do not represent all that existed in this social region. Other known communities, such as the Weatogues of Simsbury, the Poquonnocks of Windsor, and the Podunks of South Windsor, are not discussed here. Although they are socially tied to other communities in Central Connecticut, the author has not yet discovered any direct social connections to Wangunk. It also appears that these northerly communities disbanded or reintegrated earlier than others in this social region. Therefore, a review of their experiences is unnecessary for the purposes of this study.

Mattabesett

The Wangunk reservation was one of two Indian reservations within the bounds of Middletown. The other was created on the west side of the Connecticut River within the area generally known as Mattabesett. On April 24, 1670:

There was also fourtie Acres given to Sansennk and Siana half to each, buting on the bogie meadow north & east and on the swampe south, on the undivided land west. (unknown source quoted in Bayne 1884:495)

This grant of land was confirmed in the Deed of Middletown, April 5, 1673:

one parcell of Land on the west side of Conecticut Riuer formerly Layd out to SawSean shall be reCorded a& remayn to the heirs of the Sayd SawSean for Euer... (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1: 200)

This reservation was located in Middletown's Newfield district where, according to a historical account, Indians held land as late as 1713 (Field 1853:35-36). The Little River, also called the Mattabesett River, served as a canoe route between the reservation and the Connecticut River. A cemetery once existed in the vicinity. It was surrounded by stone wall fencing and had "rude monuments" placed over the graves.

Aside from these few references, little is known about Sawsean's reservation. Several references to this "Indians land" appear in the Middletown Land Records between 1670 and 1690, but no mention is made of its owners or inhabitants. After this small reservation disappeared its residents may have joined the Wangunks and/or other Indian communities.

This tract was reserved for both "Sansennk and Siana" in 1670, but only for "Sawsean and his heirs" in 1673. Perhaps Siana changed his residence to Wangunk during the short interim. There is some evidence in support of this hypothesis. A place

once known as "Siam dock" is located in Wangunk Meadow. According to tradition, this place name was derived from the sachem "Siana" who once resided there (Anonymous 1976:25; Bayne 1884:495). Siana's influence in that vicinity is also attested to by a May 1713 land transaction (PRCC, Vol.5:366) when he two other Wangunks sold a half an acre of Wangunk meadowland to a Middletown resident. Siana represents a social connection between the Wangunks and the Indians across the Connecticut River at Mattabesett.* The proximity of this community to Wangunk suggests they were closely connected, but unfortunately, the documentary record lacks evidence to substantiate this assumption.

Nayaug

This community inhabited Glastonbury, which was previously part of Wethersfield, and principally settled in the area of South Glastonbury known as Nayaug (Chapin 1853:11). In the seventeenth century this group used the Nayaug floodplain as agricultural land during the warmer months, and used the hills of East Glastonbury as hunting grounds during the colder months (McNulty 1983:3). This community was probably presided over in the latter half of the seventeenth century by Terramaggus, who held the title "Sachum of Wethersfield" (*Wethersfield Land Records*, Vol.2:252).

The Nayaugs are best remembered in local history for keeping a fort at Red Hill. As discussed in Chapter 6, the Wangunks agreed to join the Nayaugs and construct a fort at Red Hill to share during King Phillip's War. This demonstrates a sociopolitical alliance between these two communities during 1675/6.*

Not much is known about the Nayaugs aside from what can be gleaned from their land transactions. One land transaction, in particular, yields evidence of social connections between the Wangunk and Nayaug communities. A 1671 group deed, confirming the original sale of Wethersfield (*Wethersfield Land Records*, Vol.2:252), bears the marks of four individuals also named among the thirteen original proprietors of the Wangunk reservation (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214). They are Sepanamma,* Wesumshie,* Waphanke,* and Spunno.*

Another Wangunk-Nayaug connection is evident in a 1711 Wangunk land transaction, which describes the widow of Maussecup as "now living or residing at Middletown or Glastonbury" (PRCC, Vol.5:213). This suggests that she possessed a dual residency between these two communities.*

Saukiaug

The Saukiaugs inhabited what is now Hartford. The earliest known sachem of this community was Sequassen, from whom Hartford's colonial settlers "bought" land in 1636 (Speiss 1933:14). As previously discussed in Chapter 4.2, Sequassen went to war against Uncas during the 1640's, was defeated and exiled, and eventually allowed to return by colonial authorities in 1650, regaining his political status.

Sunk-squaw Warwarne, a sister of Sequassen, ruled the community along side her brother (Speiss 1933:17). The Saukiaug community's land base in Hartford's South Meadow was reserved for them by the town in 1663 (Hoadly 1897:141). In 1670, the original sale of Hartford was confirmed by the only surviving inhabitants, who were nine in number, including Warwarne (Trumbull 1886:14). Its residential community

persisted into the eighteenth century, and seems to have grown. In 1725, Gov. Talcott recorded “At Hartford about 40 Nigh ye South Side of ye town in ye Meadow” (Talcott 1896:402). However, most of their land base appears to have gone out of their possession in 1723 (Love 1935:89). Historians concur that the remainder of this community removed to Farmington, where they were assimilated into the Tunxis community (Love 1935:97). The author speculates that this occurred during the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

The Saukiaug and Wangunk communities share an early connection in the form of a kinship tie. In 1637, Roger Williams noted that Sequassen was the son of Sequin, alias Sowheag (LaFantaise 1988 Vol.1:107). Sepannama squaw, one of the thirteen named proprietors of the Wangunk reservation in 1673 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214) is identified in another land deed as "daughter to Sowheage" (*Wethersfield Land Records*, Vol.2:202-203). Therefore, Sepannama and Sequassen were blood relations, which likely fostered a long-standing kinship-based alliance between their communities' leadership structures.*

The Saukiaugs also shared a later connection to Wangunk, as seen in a will of Sarah Onepenny. In 1727 this Saukiaug community member willed to her nephew “...All my land at a place Called Wongog in or near Middletown...” (transcribed in Hermes 1999:166; Love 1935:89).* This demonstrates the persistence of a social connection into the eighteenth century.

Hockanum

The Hockanum community inhabited what is now East Hartford. This “clan” resided in the village still known as Hockanum, under the authority of Tantonimo (Speiss 1933:9) in the seventeenth century. This community maintained a palisaded fort north of the Hockanum River in the seventeenth century (Love 1935:91), and its exact location is mentioned in the 1724 will of a town resident (Love 1935:92).

In 1734 the Hockanum Indians approached the local minister, expressing an interest in learning to read and Christian worship. This minister was Rev. Samuel Woodbridge of the Third Church of Hartford, who appealed to the SPG for guidance in their instruction (Talcott 1896:480 *note*). He explained that Indian families “in his Neighborhood” expressed an interest in attending public worship at the meeting house and a willingness to learn to read. However, he also related that these Indians “pretend want of cloathing as a reason for their neglect”. The SPG granted “Ten Blankets and Twenty Primers” to be distributed among those Indians who would attend church and receive instruction in reading.

Little is known about this community, aside from its existence. DeForest claims that a community persisted there until at least 1745, but disappeared by 1760 (DeForest 1853:363), but this may not be entirely true. A local history records that “A few Indians lived in a wigwam about eighty rods south of Mr. Geo. W. Pratt’s house, on Silver Lane, about 1775-80” (Goodwin 1879:37 *note*).

At least one Wangunk appears to have relocated his residence to Hockanum during the diaspora. According to a 1741 land deed, a Wangunk land proprietor named

Tom Robin was "now residing at Hockanum in Hartford" (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546).*

Tunxis

The historic Tunxis community lived in what is now town of Farmington Connecticut. In 1673 the town of Farmington reserved three hundred acres of land for the use of this Indian community (Feder 1982:33). Of this, a one hundred-acre tract was located in a place called Indian Neck, on the north side of the great bend in the Tunxis River. By 1738, a number of Englishmen had dispossessed this community of approximately ninety acres on land at Indian Neck (Feder 1982:33).

Beginning in 1732, Rev. Samuel Whitman of Farmington instructed Tunxis youth in English grammar, religion and manner. In May 1733 New England's SPG treasurer noted the exemplary progress of an eighteen year old youth who was expected to become a "Minister to the Indians" (Talcott 1892:283-284). The following winter, Rev. Whitman was progressing with the instruction of nine boys (Talcott 1892:298-299). During the years of 1733, 1734, and 1736 appropriations were ordered from the public treasury for "dieting of the Indian lads at 4 shillings per week for the time they attend the school in said town" (Porter 1886: 170).

In 1737 John Mattawan became the schoolmaster of the Indian youths (Love 1899:202). The Indians built themselves a schoolhouse where John Mattawan served as schoolmaster into the 1740's. Rev. Whitman died in 1751 and was succeeded by Rev. Timothy Pitkin who continued his work among the Indians. In 1751 the Christianized Indians of Farmington were granted liberty to build themselves a seat in the town meeting

house (Porter 1886:170). The Tunxis received a new Indian schoolmaster, Rev. Johnson, in 1772 (Love 1899:202). This Mohegan preacher was granted an official appointment to this position by Governor Trumbull in 1773 (*Jonathan Trumbull Papers*, Vol.3, Doc.145, 151ab).

In 1767 the Tunxis filed a petition to the General Assembly claiming they have been dispossessed of almost all land at Indian Neck, and seek assistance in repossessing these lands (Feder 1982:34). The Tunxis were offered monetary compensation for their lost lands, and this offer coincided with an invitation extended from the Onondaga to come and live among them in the Colony of New York. The Tunxis responded positively to both offers. Tunxis was the only Central Connecticut Indian community named in the Brotherton treaty of 1774 (Love 1889:221-222), and by that time they were the last substantial Indian community remaining in this social region.

Their population appears to have been fortified in the mid-eighteenth century by accessions from the Wangunks, the Saukiaugs, and the Quinnipiaks of New Haven. As of 1764 some heirs of Wangunk land were noted as having dispersed to Farmington (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321). Members of the Saukiaug community also removed to Farmington, where they assimilated into the Tunxis community (Love 1935:97). The Tunxis also received acquisitions from an extraregional community, the Quinnipiaks of New Haven. By 1759 a small number of Quinnipiac families had already left New Haven and settled among the Farmington Indians (Menta 1994:339-340), and by 1774 the majority of Quinnipiaks had followed (Menta 1994:345). In 1777 there were forty adult members of the Tunxis community (DeForest 1853:375).

Despite their substantial population, the Tunxis largely dispersed and reintegrated during the late eighteenth century. Some first joined the Scatacocks of Kent, CT, and some later joined the Mahicans of Stockbridge, MA (DeForest 1853:375). Others departed in the Brotherton Movement, bound for Oneida country, while others may have reintegrated among the lesser known communities of Connecticut's Western Uplands. The Tunxis reservation was dissolved in the same fashion as the Wangunk reservation in a concurrent time frame. In 1804 some Tunxis still remained and held property in Farmington, under the care of an overseer (DeForest 1853:375), but their community had largely dispersed.

An early connection between Tunxis and Wangunk can be seen in an individual named Mauseccup, who belonged to the Narragansett royal lineage (Love 1935:96). He was named among the original thirteen proprietors of the Wangunk reservation in 1673 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214) and, as evidenced in later land records, had a wife at Wangunk (PRCC, Vol.4:98; PRCC, Vol.5:213). Mauseccup also held land rights in Farmington which involve a kinship connection. In 1681 Mauseccup gave a quitclaim deed of Farmington lands, which he signed with a son (Gay 1901:6; Porter 1886:169). Thus, Mauseccup represents a social connection between the Wangunk and Tunxis.*

Other Wangunk-Tunxis connections occur in the eighteenth century. In 1764, some heirs of Wangunk land were noted as having dispersed to Farmington (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321). Among these individuals was Hannah Squamp,* who married Farmington Indian Samuel Adams (Love 1899:336). Other names which clearly represent Wangunk-Tunxis social connections are James Wowowous,* David Towsey,*

David Robin,* and James Cusk,* who all claimed land rights at Wangunk, but were affiliated with the Tunxis during the 1760's.

Tunxis is the only community in Central Connecticut on which published ethnohistoric information exists. Two articles have been authored by Kenneth Feder, director of FRAP- the Farmington River Archaeological Project. In one article he promotes the utility of the Connecticut State Library in the search for archaeological sites, presenting a search for the "Old Tunxis Village" as a case study (Feder 1980). In another article he presents a detailed examination of land transactions, demonstrating how the Tunxis "attempted to utilize the English system of law to lodge grievances and to obtain restitution" (Feder 1982).

7.2 The Shared Social Experience in Central Connecticut

The Indian communities of Central Connecticut occupied portions of their ancestral lands for some time in the midst of a growing colonial population. The River Indians managed to maintain control over small remnants of their ancestral lands, which were sometimes reserved. In the case of the Wangunks and Tunxis, these reservations were not marginal lands, but rather, highly desirable tracts near town/village centers. Eventually, colonial pressures forced all of these communities sell or abandon their land bases, mostly during the eighteenth century. They were all subjected to a rapidly changing social context.

Within that context, there was a collective move toward adopting Christian religion and English education during the eighteenth century. During the 1730's ministers undertook efforts to convert Central Connecticut's Indians to the Christian

religion and English lifestyle, focusing on the Wangunk, Hockanum, and Farmington Indian communities. All of these communities appear to have solicited missionary activities. Formal education became status-quo among the Tunxis of Farmington, as they maintained a school for their children which benefited from the services of Indian schoolmasters. It is likely that Indian youths from other Central Connecticut communities were educated there as Tunxis received acquisitions of extratribal members. The adoption of Christianity and English literacy can be viewed as a cultural adaptation in this region, better equipping them to interact with colonial society on their social and legal terms.

All of the Indian communities of Central Connecticut eventually dispersed and reintegrated during the eighteenth century. This is not visible in the documentary record for all communities, but it was probably a general trend. During the Wangunk's diaspora they ended up joining other Indian communities at Mohegan, New Hartford, Hartford, and Farmington. Some of them would eventually make their way out of the Connecticut Colony during the Brotherton Movement of the 1770's. Some members of the Saukiaugs reintegrated among the Tunxis of Farmington. The Tunxis received acquisitions from the Wangunks, Saukiaugs, and the Quinnipiacs of New Haven, an extraregional group. They became, for a short while, the last substantial Indian community in the region. But shortly thereafter, the Tunxis community would also reintegrate, removing to Scatacook, Stockbridge, Oneida, and possibly elsewhere. All communities had dispersed by the turn of the nineteenth century through a dance of migrations and reintegrations.

7.3 Extraregional Social Connections

This section presents social connections held between Wangunk and Indian communities outside of the Central Connecticut social region. These extraregional communities are separate from the association known as the River Indians. As will be seen here, the Central Connecticut social region, although a real and definable social region, was by no means socially isolated or enclosed.

As in the previous section, an asterisk is inserted to mark the identification of a social thread, or connection. Vignettes are again presented to provide a basic familiarity with the community, in addition to how they connect to Wangunk. The sole purpose of this section is to illustrate Wangunk's connections to communities outside of their region, adding threads to their social web.

Mohegan

The Mohegans of coastal Connecticut are one of the most historically prominent groups in the state. Originally part of a greater association of communities known as Pequot, the Mohegans split off in the early seventeenth over a leadership dispute (Soulsby 1981:119). In the seventeenth century their chief sachem, Uncas, formed a close alliance with the Connecticut Colony's governing authorities. This provided the Mohegans with political advantages which helped them to survive as a Native people. By the end of King Phillip's War they were the only tribe of significant strength that remained in southern New England (Soulsby 1981:137). In 1725, their population was assessed at "three hundred fifty and one" (Talcott 1896:397), which was the largest population of any Native group in the Connecticut Colony by that time. The tribe has

survived into the present day, lives in Montville, and has achieved the status of federal recognition.

Three social connections are evident between the Wangunks and Mohegans. The earliest dates to King Phillip's War (ca. 1675/6). As discussed in Chapter 6, the Wangunks and Nayaugs shared a fort at Red Hill and placed themselves voluntarily under the government of Owaneco, a Mohegan sachem and first son of Uncas.* This represents a political alliance between the Wangunks and Mohegans. Also, when Rev. Treat intruded upon a Wangunk powow in 1734, he noted the presence of a number of Mohegan Indians in attendance (Talcott 1896:483).* The third connection can be seen in an individual named Hannah Mamanash who petitioned the General Assembly in 1760 in regard to her land rights at Wangunk. She is thought to be the wife of Rev. Samuel Ashbo, the Mohegan preacher (Love 1899:76-78).*

Narragansett

In the seventeenth century the Narragansetts were a powerful sociopolitical association of Native communities centered around coastal Rhode Island. But, by the end of King Phillip's War, their territory had been largely ravaged and depopulated (Simmons 1989:51). Following this event, the surviving Narragansetts, and other New England Indians, merged with the eastern Niantics, and this coalition was thereafter referred to as the Narragansetts, en-bloc (Simmons 1989:53). Today, the descendants of these Indians maintain a tribal identity, and have attained federal recognition.

One direct social connection is evident between the Wangunks and Narragansetts in an individual named Maussecup.* He was a son of the Narragansett sachem

Miantonomi and brother of Canonchet (Love 1935: 96). He belonged to the Narragansett royal lineage, but never gained status among them as a sachem. When the Wangunk reservation was created in 1763, "Massakump" was listed among the thirteen original proprietors (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214). He appears to have secured his land rights there through marriage. He took a wife in the Middletown area who sold land at Wangunk in May 1693 (PRCC, IV: 98), and as his widow in 1711 (PRCC, Vol. 5: 213). This is the most distant social connection the author has discovered for the Wangunks within southern New England.

New Hartford

There is virtually no published information on the historic Indians of New Hartford. New Hartford is in the Western Uplands, just west of the author's defined social region. Historians claim that two Indian communities existed near the junction of the east and west branches of the Farmington River, within the Bounds of New Hartford (Crofut 1937 Vol.1:411; Hale & Case 1886:67). One was located at "Indian Hill", and the other at "Satan's Kingdom". According to tradition, the Satan's Kingdom community was "a heterogeneous settlement of renegade Indians, Negroes, and whites" (Crofut 1937 Vol.1:411), who inhabited the place in the last years of the eighteenth century (Phillips 1992:131).

The author suspects that the New Hartford communities were culturally similar to Feder's "Lighthouse Tribe" in nearby Barkhamstead. All of these communities formed in the Western Uplands, probably during the eighteenth century, and enjoyed a degree of

separation from colonial society for some time. The New Hartford Indian communities are the focus of ongoing research by Connecticut archaeologists.

One social connection is evident between Wangunk and the New Hartford communities. Some members of the Wangunk community had migrated to New Hartford during the diaspora. In 1764 a public record indicates that some Wangunks had relocated their residence to New Hartford (PRCC, Vol.12:320-321).*

Western Niantic

The Western Niantic Indians, also simply known as the Niantics, were a coastal community that inhabited what is now Lyme, CT. In 1672, they received a three hundred-acre tract (DeForest 183:382). Attawanhood, alias Joshua, was the third son of Uncas and sachem of the Western Niantics (DeForest 1853:288). He represented a close alliance between the Mohegans and Niantics. They maintained a substantial community into the eighteenth century, as their population was assessed at one hundred and sixty three in 1725 (Talcott 1896:397).

One social connection is evident between the Niantic and Wangunk Indians. When the missionary Rev. Richard Treat intruded upon a Wangunk powow in 1734, he noted the presence of a number of “Nahantick” Indians in attendance (Talcott 1896:483).*

Haddam

In the town of Haddam, which is located to the south of Middletown along the Connecticut River, there appears to have been at least one historic Indian community. In

the May 1662 deed of Haddam, the local Indians agreed to transfer all land to the colonial settlers “except thirtie mile Iland and fourtye acres of land att Pataquounk” (transcribed in Clark 1949:6-8). This deed appears to have nullified the February 1662 sale of Thirty Mile Island by Saunk Squaw Taukiske (transcribed in Bates 1924:137). Not much is known about these Indians, possibly because they caused “no serious controversies between the settlers” (Clark 1949:9, 10) and themselves.

In the seventeenth century land rights at Thirtie Mile Island appear to have been held exclusively by a lineage of Saunk Squaws (evidenced in Bates 1924:137; and Hermes 1999:151-153). Both the land and status of Saunk Squaw were handed down from Taukiske to Hempamum (alternately spelled Pampemum) to Cheechums. A record indicates that Indians maintained land rights there into the 1780’s (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 2nd Ser., Vol.2, Doc.148.)

There are two connections between the Indians of Haddam and the Wangunks. Taukiske appears to have held some right in Wangunk land. A 1692 Middletown land transaction records the purchase of a parcel of Wangunk meadowland from “Towne hash que sunch squa” (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:61).^{*} Another connection can be seen in Sepannama, the daughter of Sowheage. She was listed among the thirteen original proprietors of the Wangunk reservation in 1763 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214), and also marked the 1662 deed of Haddam (Clark 1949:6-8).^{*}

7.4 Social Networking: Results and Conclusions

Now that a regional context has been provided, the results of this study will be presented in light of that context. The social threads which connected Wangunk to

surrounding Indian communities have all been revealed, and are combined in a graphic titled “Wangunk Web of Social Interaction ca. 1670-1780” (see **Appendix J**). This is a concrete expression of Wangunk’s nature as a socially connected entity. The most numerous social connections were within their own social region in Central Connecticut. Their strongest connections appear to have been with the Nayaug’s, which were held mostly in the second half of the seventeenth century, and with the Tunxis, which were held mostly in the mid-eighteenth century. Wangunk’s social web also ties them to groups outside of their social region, where southern New England’s coastal communities are represented.

This social web illustrates a basic truth about the nature of Wangunk as a community; that it was not a socially bounded entity, but rather, an entity socially interfaced with other communities throughout its known history. This is a simple conclusion drawn from an empirical process of analysis.

But of what value, or significance, was this social network to the Wangunks? In answering this question, the author illustrates another basic truth about Wangunk as a community. The Wangunks did not “disappear” as popular history might recall, they simply reintegrated among other groups, surviving as a Native people. It appears that the Wangunks’ social connections facilitated their reintegration among other Native communities.

During their diaspora the Wangunks ended up joining other Indian communities at Mohegan, New Hartford, Hartford, and Farmington. Some of them would eventually make their way out of the Connecticut Colony during the Brotherton Movement of the 1770’s. So, although the place once known as Wangunk had been largely abandoned, the

Wangunks themselves survived. “Intertribal” contacts allowed the Wangunks to reintegrate in the larger social system, when the place known as Wangunk was no longer desirable. Simply put, this ability to reintegrate and survive within Native culture was a function of social networking. Thus, social networking served as an adaptive mechanism in Native cultural survival. Therein lies the significance of Wangunk’s web of social interaction.

As shown in the intraregional summary, reintegration happened elsewhere in Central Connecticut. In the mid-eighteenth century, the Tunxis received acquisitions from the Wangunks, Saukiaugs, and the Quinnipiacs of New Haven, an extraregional group. They became, for a short while, the last substantial Indian community in the region. But shortly thereafter, the Tunxis community would also reintegrate, removing to Scatacook, Stockbridge, Oneida, and possibly elsewhere. They reintegrated among other Native communities as a means of survival in changing social contexts. One of the most important factors in these contexts was the constant loss of land to an expanding English population. At Wangunk, Middletown members applied legal pressure to Connecticut’s legislature to dissolve the Wangunk land base, and this end was achieved. As reservations disappeared, as did they all, Indians had to permanently relocate their residences.

As McMullen has illustrated, southern New England’s Native history is fraught with such reintegrations of peoples across the landscape (McMullen 2000), and Central Connecticut is part of this larger trend. The author believes that the maintenance of social networks facilitated reintegration, and thus served as vital tools in the survival of Native peoples as they adapted to changing social contexts. “Intertribal” connections

were certainly a preexisting aspect of local Native society. But, when an individual or group found it advantageous or necessary to join another Indian community, social connections were capitalized on which served as tools in cultural adaptation.

Of all the historic Indian communities once inhabiting Central Connecticut, none have persisted into the present day. In fact, Wangunk can be placed among the vast majority of southern New England's Indian communities to "disappear" during historic times. If one searches the index of DeForest's book, he/she will find the final listing under "Wangunk" as such: "Sale of their lands and their dispersion and extinction" (1853:508). This is misleading because the Wangunks did not become "extinct." Although the place known as Wangunk was largely abandoned, its people clearly survived.

The author has researched and presented the Wangunks from the perspective of community and place. However, one difficult question should be addressed before concluding. Were the Wangunks a "tribe?" The author cannot present a true and absolute answer, but puts forth the following thoughts for the reader to consider.

Some recent historical works support the notion that the Wangunks were a large tribe that occupied the original townships of Wethersfield, Middletown, and Haddam (Cooper 1986; Hermes 1999:151; McNulty 1983:1). The tribal headquarters appears to have been at Wangunk, and other communities in that region have been termed "sub-tribes" (McNulty 1983:1). This notion appears to have had its genesis in DeForest's *History of the Indians of Connecticut* (1853:54, 264-265, 363). DeForest cites early seventeenth century history as the initial basis for this interpretation. Sequin originally resided at Wethersfield, and then relocated his residence to Middletown, which may

suggest that all subsequent Indian populations within those townships remained politically unified. He also includes the Indians of Haddam as Wangunks (264). DeForest may have also grouped the Indians of Wethersfield, Middletown, and Haddam together, in part, because some Indians mark group land deeds in two or all of these towns during the second quarter of the eighteenth century. If this is correct, then DeForest's notion of Wangunk as tribe is based on social networking.

The author believes this is a deterministic construction. Although the leadership structures of neighboring Indian communities may have been connected, this does not mean they were under central leadership. The author is not aware of any Wethersfield or Haddam documents that refer to their local Indian populations as "Wangunk." In the primary source documents, Wangunk is a place in Middletown, and a Native people who resided there. That is the notion of Wangunk employed by the author. DeForest's tribal notion has yet to be truly justified by those who have perpetuated it in historical literature.

The following information may contribute toward a more emic notion of Wangunk. The Wangunks possessed a reserved land base and settlement in Middletown and maintained control over it for a century. They were clearly recognized by the Colony of Connecticut as a sociopolitical entity. This group had a Native leadership structure, as two sachems have been identified. An expression of communal identity is evidenced in a 1765 petition submitted to the General Assembly by "We the Subscribers Indians of the Tribe of Wongunck in metabesett alias Midletown" (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146). These subscribers were not living at Wangunk any longer, but still identified themselves with that group. So, the Wangunks of Middletown may have

existed, and conceived of themselves, as a “tribe” for some time. Or perhaps they simply identified themselves with Wangunk as a place of origin.

How long after their dispersal did the Wangunks maintain their original communal identity? What did the word “tribe” mean to the Wangunks? Perhaps these questions could only be answered by the Wangunks themselves. The concept of tribe among Native Americans may vary from one group to the next, and may also vary over time (Cornell 1988:41-42). Some form of Wangunk identity, whether it be tribal, communal, or genealogical is probably still in existence. This is evidenced in a 1977 census of Connecticut Indians, which cites the presence of eight “Wongunk” (Connecticut Indian Affairs Council 1977). The author has studied the Wangunk from the simple perspective of community and place, to gain a perspective that is free from the determinism imposed by notions of tribe.

Today, the Indian communities of southern New England are few in number, when compared to what they once were in the seventeenth century. However, it is important to remember that they emerged from a collective heritage fraught with “intertribal” connections. This study of Wangunk is a contribution to this greater picture, adding another facet to the socially interconnected heritage of southern New England’s Indians.

APPENDIX A

DEED CONFIRMING THE SALE OF MIDDLETOWN

(Middletown Land Records, Vol.1:200-201)

This writeing made the Twenty fouerth of January 1672, Betwen Sepunnames Joan Alias weekpissick: MaChize wesumpsha wamphaneh: Spunnor Sachamas TaCCom Huit proprietors of Midleton Alias Mattabesett of the one part and Mr Samⁿ: willys Cap^m John TallCott: Mr James Richards & John Allyn in behalfe of the Inhabitants of Midletone on the other parte wittnessest that the sayd Sepunnamos: Joan alias weekpissicke MaChize wesumpsha wamphaneh Spunnor Sachamos TaCCum Huit Being priuy to & well acquainted with Sowheag the great Sacham of Mattabesett his gift of great part of the Township of Midleton to the Honor^d Mr Haynes formerly & for a farther & full consideration to us now granted & payd By the Sayd Mr Samⁿ willys Captⁿ John TallCott Mr James Richards & John Allyn haue giuen Granted Bargained Sould & confirmed & by these presents doe fully & absolutely giue grant and Confirm vnto the Sayd Gentn all that tract of Land within these folowing abuttments viz on Wethersfield Bounds on the North on Haddam Bounds on the South & to run from the great Riuer the wholle Bredth towards the East Six Miles & from the Great Riuer towards the west Soe farr as the Generall Court of ConectiCut hath Granted the Bounds of Midleton shall Extend to haue & to hould the afoare mentioned Tract of Land as it is Bounded with all the Meadows pastures woods vnder wood stones quarries Brookes ponds Riuers proffits comodities & appurtenances what Soeuer belonging their vnto vnto the Sayd Mr Samⁿ: Wyllys: Cap^m John TallCott Mr James Richards in behalfe & for the use of the Inhabitants of the Towne of Midleton their heirs & assignes for Euer allways provided their be Three Hundred Acres of Land within the Township of Midleton on the East Side of Conecticut Riuer Layd out Bounded & recorded to be & remayn the heirs of Sowheag & the Mattabeset Indians & their heirs for Euer as allSo one parcell of Land on the west side of Conecticut Riuer formerly Layd out to SawSean shall be reCorded a& remayn to the heirs of the Sayd SawSean for Euer any thing in this deed to the contrary notwithstanding And the fore Sayd Sepunnamor Joan alias weekpissick maChize wesumpsha wamp hanch Spinnoe SaChamas TaCCum Huit for them selues Doe covenant to & wth the Sayd M^s Willys Captⁿ tallCott Mr Richards & John Allyn In behalfe of the Inhabitants of midleton, that they the Sayd Sepunnamos Joan MaChiz, wesunsha & c haue only full power Good right & lawful Authority to Grant Bargayne sell & Conuey all & Singular the before hearby Granted or mentioned to be granted p^mises wth their & Euery of their appurtenances aCCording as is aboue Expressed vnto the Sayd Mr willys Captⁿ Tall Cott Mr Richards & John Allyn in behalfe of the inhabitants of Midleton afor Sayd their heirs

& assignes for Euer & that they the said Inhabitants of Midletone shall & may by force & virtue of these p'sents from timt to time & at all tims for Euer hear after lawfully peaCably & quietly haue hold use occupy & possesse & Enioy the afoar Sayd parcell of Land with all its rights members & appurtenances & haue receiue & take the rents Issues & profits their of to their own proper use & behoufe for Euer with out any let suit trouble or disturbance what So Euer of the Sayd Sepunnancor Joan alias Weckpissick MaChize wesumpsha wamp hanch spunnor sachamoss TaCComhuit their heirs or assignes or of any other person or persons, Clayming right by from or vnder us or any of us or by or means act conSsent privity or procurement & that free & clear & freely & clearly acquitted Exonerated & discharged or otherwise well & sofisently Saued & kept Harmless by the said Sepunnamor Joan Machize wesumpeha, wamp hanch Spunnor SaChamos TaCCumhuit their heirs Executors & Administrators of & from all former & other grants gifts bargains Salls titles trubles demands & incumbrances what So Euer had made Committed Suffered or done by the Sayd Sepunnamor Joan MaChize wesumpsha Wamp hanch Spunnoe Sachamose & Taccomhuit In witness hare of they haue Signed Sealed & deliuered this writting with their own hands the day and year first above written Signed Sealed & Deliuered in presencs of vs

Joseph Nash

George Graue

Thomas Edwards

robard Panford

nessehegan X his mark

wannoe X his mark

Taramugas X his mark

PuCCanan X his mark

SaChamos mother X hir mark

Sepunnamor X hir mark Seal

Joan alias weckpesick X hir mark Seal

Mamachize X his mark Seal

Wesumpsha X his mark Seal

Wamphanch X his mark Seal

Spunnor X his mark Seal

SaChamus X his mark Seal

TaCCumhuit X his mark Seal

the originall is entered in the old Court Booke of records fol: 70 Aprill 5th 1673

P^r me John Allyn Secrety.

APPENDIX B

A DEED OF MIDDLETOWN

(*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:201)

Midleton Aprill the Eight on thousand Six Hundred seenty & three Paskanna Rachiaschk maSsekump Robin Penampsskin with the Consent of the Natiues whoe signed & sealed this deed aboue written were acknowledged to be interested in this land reserued to them theirin & for them selues their heires & assignes did & by these presents doe giue Grant & confirm unto the Inhabitants of Midleton their heirs & assigns for Euer all their right title Intrust in all that tract of Land Granted by the aboue written deed unto the Sayd Inhabitants of midleton as fully & largely as is Expressed in the aboue written deed as witnesses or hands the Day & yeare first aboue written

Signed sealed & Deliuered

in the presencs of vs

Nath: White

John Hall

Samuell Stocken

Passunnas mark X Seal

massekups mark X Seal

Robins mark X Seal

Pewomps Skins mark X Seal

Rachiasks marke X Seal

This aboue written is a tru ReCord of the Deed
of the Land within the township of midleton from
the Indian proprietors

Pr Mee John Hall Recor^d

APPENDIX C

DEED OF WANGUNK RESERVATION

(Middletown Land Records, Vol.1:214)

May 28th 1673

Land in middletowne In the County of Hartford in the Corporation of ConecteCut belonging To those Indians Whos nams are vnder Written Sepunamus Joan Alis Weckpissick machize wesomsha wamphanch Spunnoe Sachamus TaCom huit paskunnas masekump Robins Rachiasks penampskine Recorded to them & to their heires for euer

To one percell of Land on the East Side the Great Riuer Neare Wongonke Containing by estimation fifty Acres be it more or Lesse Abutting on the Great Riuer West & on other Land of theirs East & on Land of thomas Ranyes & a high way South & on a high Way & their owne Land & the Great Riuer North with a high way Athirt it about the midle of it of four Rods broad

A nother part of this Land at Wongonke Containing two hundred & fifty Acres be it more or Lesse Abutting west on their own land & thomas Ranyes land & John Sauedges Land & Nathanill Whits land & Anthony Martins land & John Warners land & samuell Stockins & John Kirbys Land and East on vndeuided Land at the north East Corner Coming on a playne to a white oake marked with I T & I A & at the South East Corner on a white oake marked with I H & D S & South on undeuided Land hauing at the South west Corner a White oake marked with I T & I A and on the north on Land yet vndeuided

Pr M^e John Hall ReCord^r

APPENDIX D

“MR. TREAT'S STATEMENT, 1737”

(transcribed in Talcott 1896:479-484; original manuscript in *Connecticut Archives, Ecclesiastical Affairs 1658-1789*, 1st Ser., Vol.5, Doc.9.)

In the fall of the year, 1734, I being at Boston, heard there that the Govern^r of that Province had newly recomended to the Court (which was then Sitting) their duty to take some further measures than had been taken towards the reformation and Conversion of the heathen in these american parts - which never was very agreeable with me; whereupon when I returned home I went to that party of Indians at Middletown (hoping that by Reason of Good Understanding there has formerly been between my predecessors and them, I might the better win upon them) to treat with them about their Subjecting themselves to be Instructed on things of a religious nature; and offered them that if they would I would do wt I could that Some meet person might be Improved, in the first place to learn them to read - who took the Motion into Consideration, and after Some Considerable discourse among themselves told me that if I would come among them they would Submitt to my Instructions. I told them that it would be Something difficult for me by reason of my living So far distant from them, however I would take the Case into Consideration. I should then Imediately have waited upon his Hon^r the Gov^r for his advice and Instructions in the affair, but it was so difficult passing the river at that Season that I Could not. Wherefore I advised with Sundry ministers on that side the river, who advised me to go as speedily as I could and begin to Instruct them, particularly M^r Woodbridge of Hartford, who told me that M^r. Joseph Pitkin had primers sent to him to distribute, in order to forward that business. I went with him, and he helped me to Some, and accordingly I began to Instruct them, Dec^r. 26th, 1734, and Continued So to do until the river was passible, by which time I learned Something more of their inclinations, and readiness to receive instruction. Then waited upon his Hon^r and Informed him of what I had been doing, and w prospect I had of Success. Upon which acct he discovered good satisfaction, and also directed & improved me to Continue with them. Whereupon I Continued to Instruct their Children which were there then present, to the number of about 12 or 14, and also maintained at least a weekly Conference with them, thereby to lead them into a Knowledge of the true god, and of our obligations to approve our Selves in his Service. Which Service was very difficult, for they were Such Strangers to the written word of God, that whatever I Quoted from them had but little effect, otherwise than as it was agreeable with those Natural principles upon which I was obliged to proceed with them. And besides it was very difficult to Impart to them anything of this nature by reason of their brokenness of Speech in the English dialect, and their

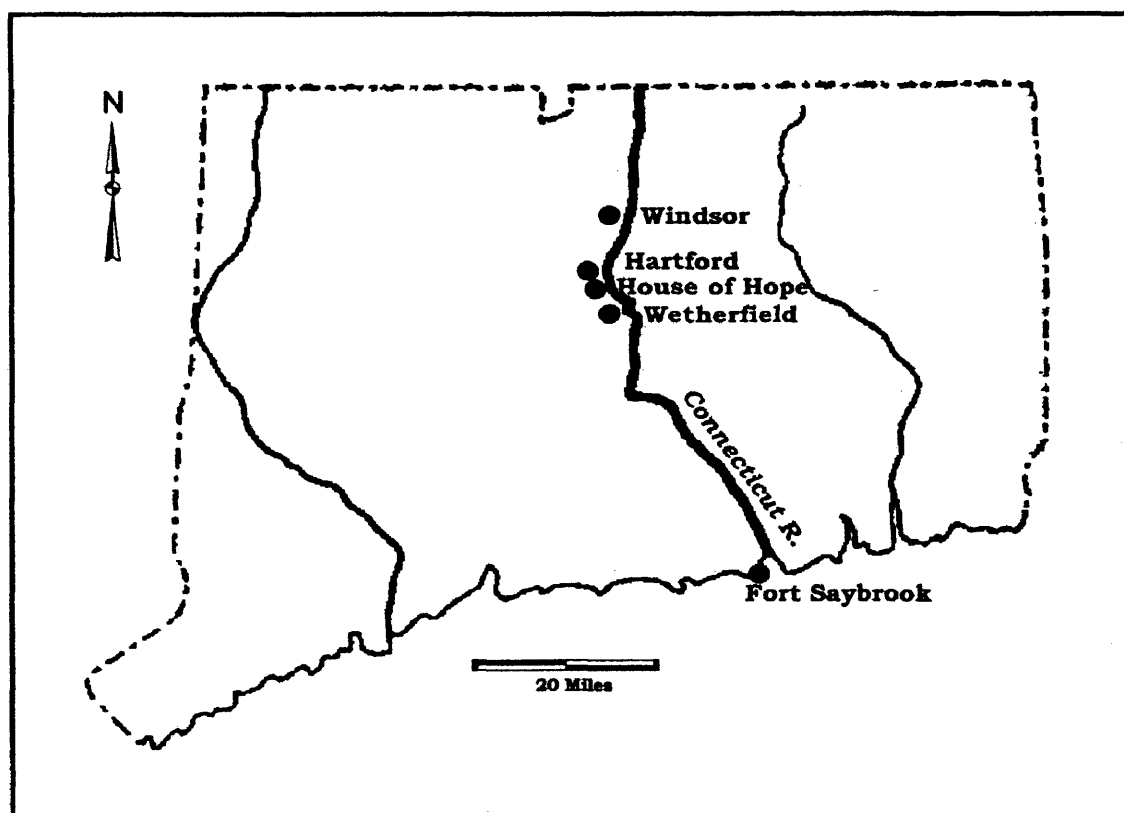
unacquaintedness with things, as also an aversion thereunto, in Some of them. I shall give one Instance of the many that I might Instance in to discover this. I took occasion to Speak of the resurrection and Judgement to Come, &c., and either at that time of Soon after one of them (in a Scoffing and ridiculing manner), asked me (a pig then lying by the fire) whether that pig would rise again after it was dead as well as wee. It would not have done to have answered a fool according to his folly, and yet he must be answered according there unto, otherwise he would have been wise in his own Conceit, and with much adoe I Silenced him for that present, but it was a great while before I Could do it. Thus I Continued daily to Instruct them, except a few Intervals, which my then late remove obliged me unto the whole of which amounted to about the Space of 3. weeks or a month. In April I began to preach to them upon the Sabbath, and Continued so to do till some time in June next following Except two Sabbaths, one of which I was prevented by high water, and the other when they were gone to the Election, as well as to Instruct them, and answer their objections and little Slouffles as afore hinted, and then left them.

And the reason of my Leaving them is as follows. Notwithstanding the Gov^r his Sending to Boston (I suppose more than once) Giving an acct of my Service, and what prospect I had of Success, yet there was no return that I thought I could in any measure depend upon, as an Incouragement to my progress therein, and the necessities of my family then Calling me to do Something that might serve to their Support, however as my occasions would allow and as I had opportunity, I did all that Summer, what lay in my power to beget a good opinion in them Concerning their receiving instruction in things before spoken of. There was one piece of Service more which I did, and if your patience will allow me I shall give an acct of, Viz. Some time in the latter part of that Summer, they had a Great dance, at which time I Supposed they would be together that I might get an acct of their number, as directed unto by His Hon^r the Gov^r and Comiss^{rs} at Boston, which I had before Endeavored to do but Could not. They mett upon fryday in the afternoon. and upon Satterday I went upon the business afores^d., as also not knowing but that I might be a means to prevent no little wickedness which they are Comonly Guilty of at Such times. When I Came I found them in a most forlorn Condition, Singing, dancing, humming, &c., the like to which I had never before seen, and so Compelling the rest of y^r number. Some of them, Seeing me Come there at that time, Came to me and asked what I was Come there for, and told me I had no business there, and bid me begone. I told them that others Came to see them, and others did so, which they allowed of, and asked them why they were so affronted at my Coming there. One of them, with no little fury, told me that I was Come to see if I might not preach to them the next day, which he said I should not do. I replyd that that was not my business there at that time, however I was ready to do them all the Service that lay in my power to do. I Subjoyned that Seeing they were Come together to take off their mourning Cloths for one that was dead. I thought it was a proper Season for them to do Something to fit them for death; for others would put on their mourning Cloths for them as they had done, and were then putting them off for one that was dead. He told me that to morrow was their day, and therefore I should not preach there. However a number of Nahantick and moheegan Indians gathered together and told me if I would Come to a house adjacent they would Come there and hear me preach the next day.

Accordingly the next morning I went, but when I Came to the house none of them were there, they had other business to do. But understanding that one of the Indian Children was there very Sick, I thought I had a Good Excuse to go to them, and so lay my Self in the way of doing them some Service. When I came I went to see the Sick Child, and had not been there long before Sundry of them Came and did what they Could (Except violence) to Drive me away. However a number of them Interposed, and told me that if I would withdraw to a number of aple trees about ten or fifteen rods distant, they would Speedily Come to me and they w^{id} hear me preach. I withdrew thither -- I had not been there long before they began the most Dofull noise that Can be thought of, it Consisted of Grunting, Groning, Sighing, &c., which was Caused by their Smiting upon their breast. I Cannot Express the forlorn, dollerous noise that they then made. In Short I Suppose they were in a paw wawe, and the reason of it was this, Viz., the then lately deceased Indian a little before his death, had a Quarrel with another Indian, and in the time of his Sickness Called for his Gun to kill that Indian, which made them suspect that that Same Indian had poisoned the deceased, which was the Cause of his death -- and they wanted to know of the Devil whether it was so. I was at a Great loss what to do at that time. However I Expected the devil would Speedily make his appearance, and in Short if he had been incarnate in Every one of them, I Cannot think there Could have been a much worse noise -- however in the midst of this I broke in among them, and broke them up for that time -- but I Cannot Express the rage Some of them were in and Seemed as tho they would Immediatly fall upon and rid the world of me. But there were some that again interposed, and told me that they desired that I would withdraw as before, and they would Speedily Come to me. I told them was afraid they would do as they had before done, and return to their wickedness again -- they urged so much that I went as before. I had not been there but a few minutes before the began their Infernall din as before -- but then I presently broke in upon them again, and broke them up a Second time -- and So from time to time till at last their hellish rout was broken up, and after Some time to Season them (for they were very unmeet) for divine Service, I began Divine Service among them, they were very orderly and no disturbance made -- and afterwards their neighbours told me there never was Such a thing before among them, for the Evening after the Sabath there was but little if any noise as used to be at other times. The next morning they went off and dispierced, and I Cant learn that they have Ever been there since upon any like occasion.

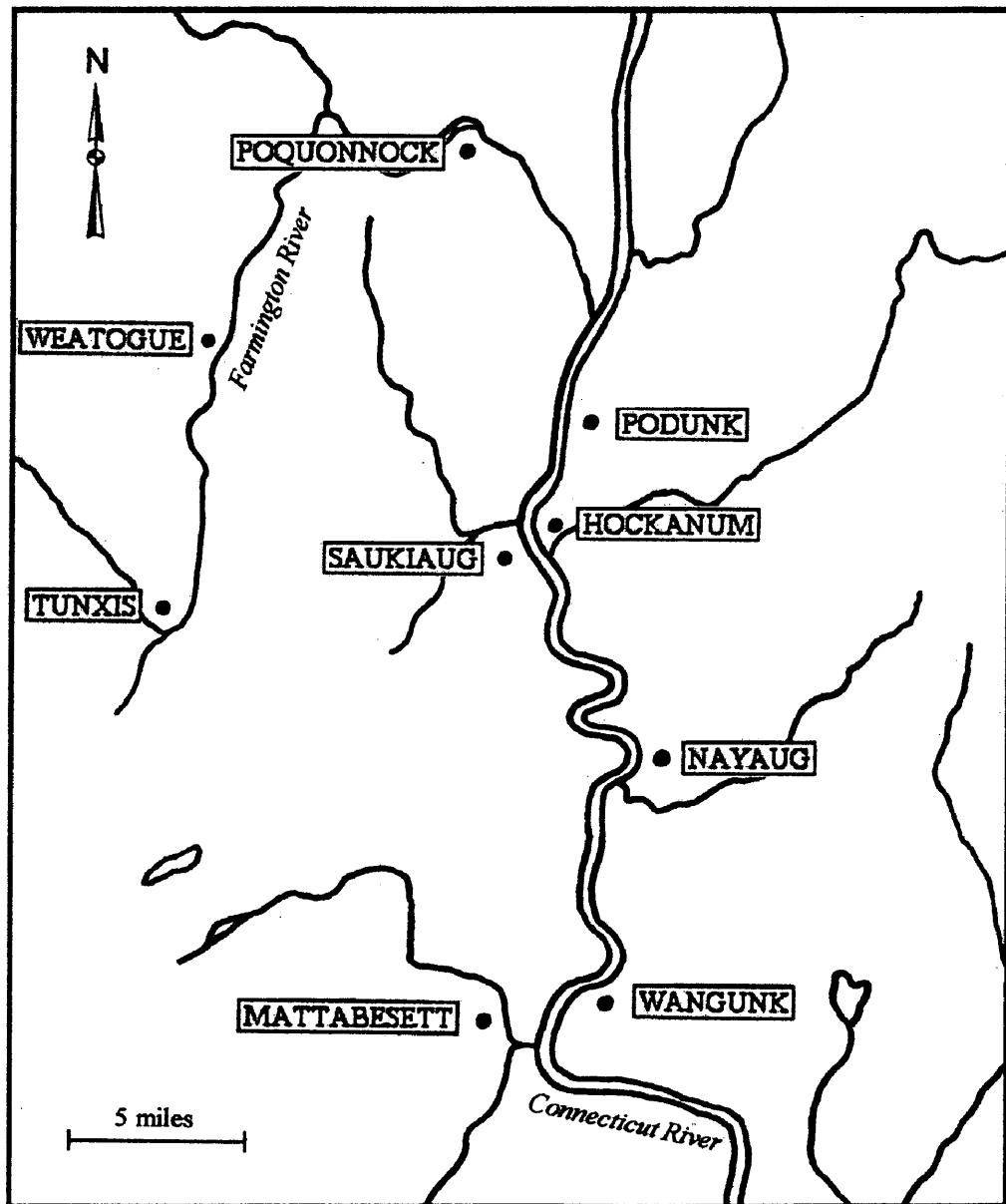
Thus I've Given as Short a narrative of my doings as I Could & yet fear I have tyred your patience -- If I have I ask pardon of this honorable Court, and pray that you would Consid^r my hard labour and toyl in that Service, and if it is worthy to recommend my request, you would Grant me according to what you Shall think I ought in justice to have.

APPENDIX E



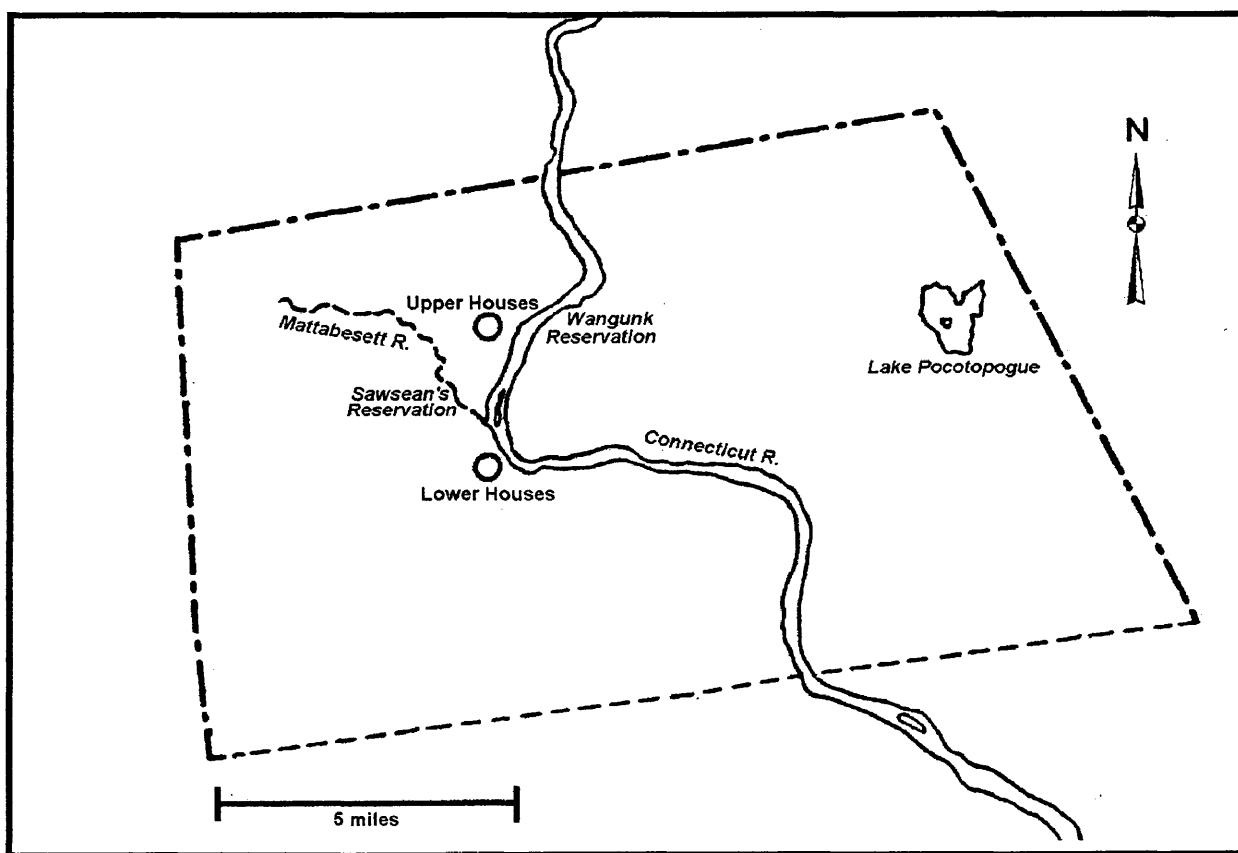
European settlements in Connecticut, ca. 1636

APPENDIX F



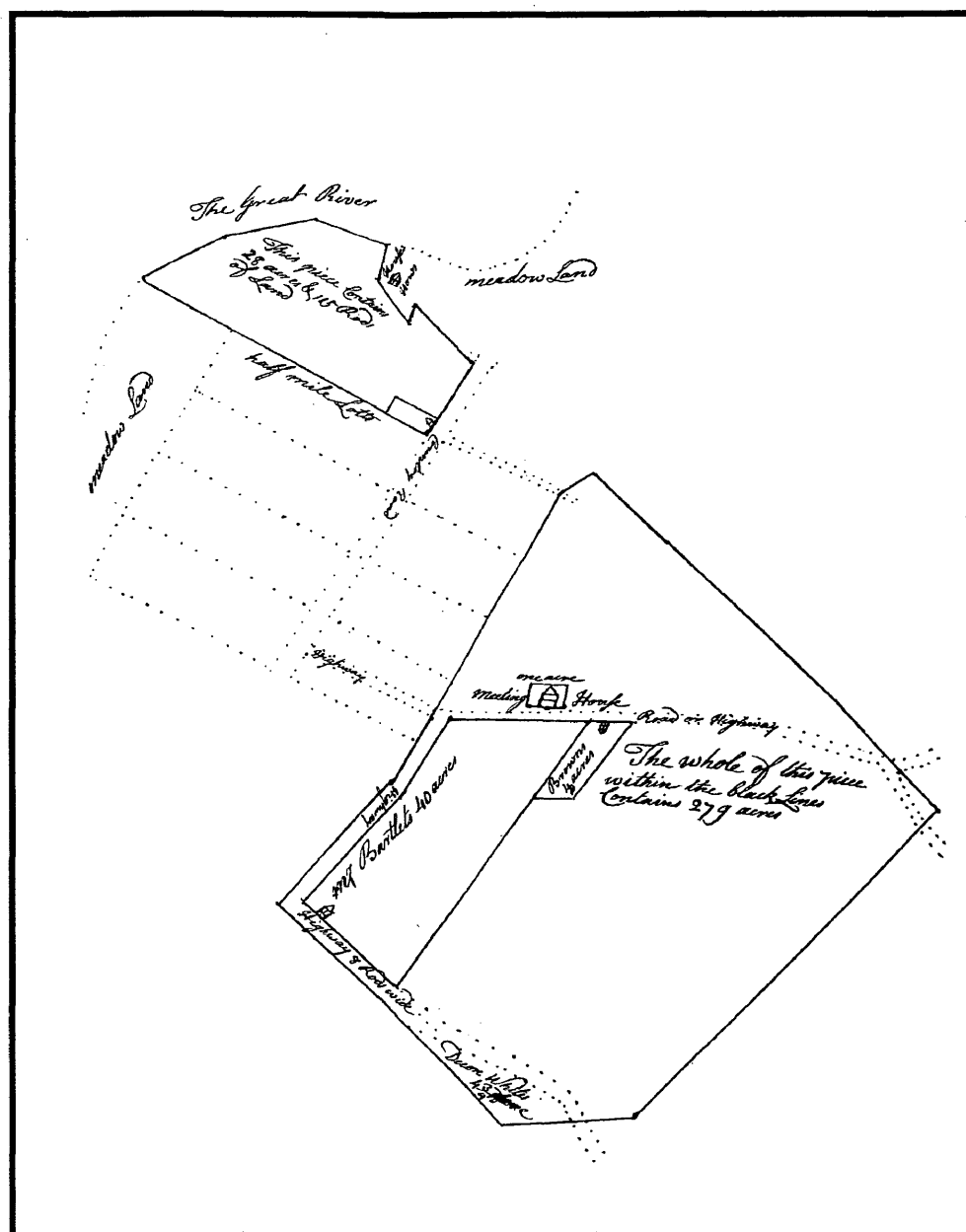
Communities of the Central Connecticut social region in the mid-seventeenth century.

APPENDIX G



Middletown's colonial and Indian settlements, ca. 1700

APPENDIX H



“Plan of Indian at Wongunk,” A Survey map by William Welles, 1756

APPENDIX I

A KEY TO THE WILLIAM WELLES SURVEY MAP

The Great River: The Connecticut River.

This piece Contains 28 acres & 115 Rods of Land: This is the smaller reservation tract, commonly known as Indian Hill.

The whole of this piece within the black Lines Contains 279 acres: This is the larger reservation tract, also known as Meeting House Hill.

half mile Lotts: Sometime prior to 1673, these four "half mile lots" were assigned, from north to south, to proprietors Thomas Ranney, John Savage, Nathaniel White and Anthony Martin (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214).

meadow Land (East of Indian Hill): This floodplain is Wangunk Meadow.

Country Road: Portland's present-day Main Street. The earliest reference to this "highway" is on April 24, 1670 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, First Ser., Vol.2:137).

Highway 8 rods wide: Present-day William Street.

Highway (along NW boundary of *mr Bartlets 40 acres*): Present-day High Street.

Road or Highway: Present-day Bartlett Street. The southern fork at the eastern end of this street is Penny Corner Road.

mr Bartlets 40 acres: This tract was purchased by Rev. Moses Bartlett in 1732 from twenty Wangunks (Bayne 1884:496).

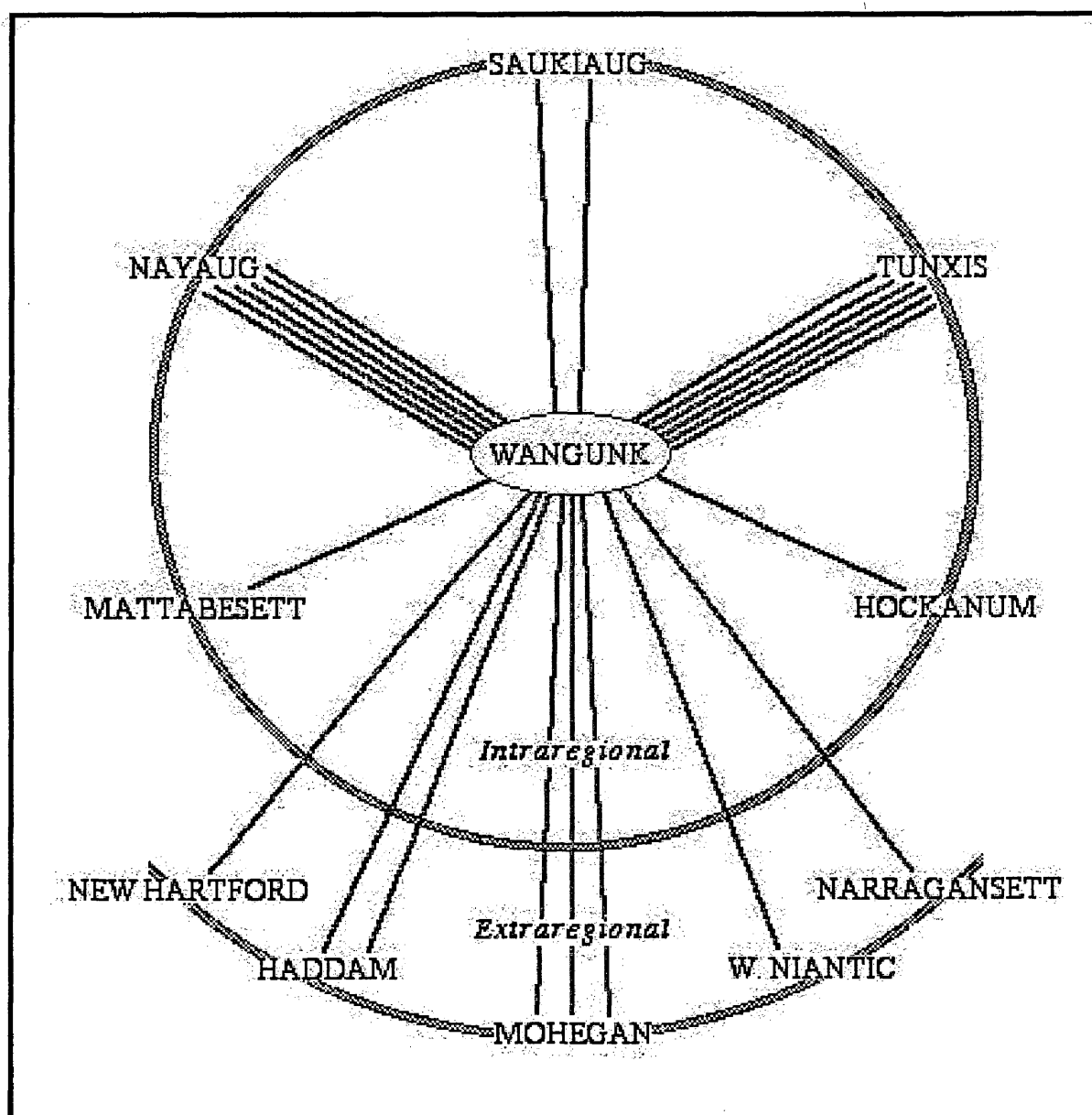
Deacon Whites 4 3/4 acre: Land of Ebenezer White Esq., elected church deacon in 1768 (Field 1853:255).

one acre Meeting House: The second meeting house of the Third Society of Middletown, erected in 1750 measuring 56 feet by 42 (Field 1853:256).

House H[our?]: This structure is likely associated with the Lewis shipyard.

(Unlabeled structure and parcel on) *Country Road*: In his survey report, William Wells noted "one acre that Richard Strickland owns" on Indian Hill (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2:139). This parcel was purchased from Tom Cuschoy in 1747, and in 1756 he sold it with a house and a store (Loether et al. 1980:18).

APPENDIX J



Wangunk Web of Social Interaction, ca. 1670-1780

APPENDIX K

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF WANGUNK RESERVATION PROPRIETORS

The following is a listing of all known Indian proprietors identified during the Wangunk land sales process, along with biographical information. Information pertaining to relatives is included when possible. This biographical information helps illustrate how the Wangunks were socially connected with other Indian communities into their diaspora.

Various community affiliations appear among the collection of people who identified themselves as Wangunks, or proprietors of Wangunk land. This demonstrates the persistence of social bonds between the Wangunks and other Indian communities. The Wangunks seem to share their strongest social ties with Farmington's Tunxis community during this period.

Samuel Adams: This individual held community affiliations with the Quinnipiacs, Tunxis, and Wangunks. Samuel's father was a Quinnipiac Sachem known as Adam who "bought of a squaw" land at Farmington (Love 1899:335). Adam divided this land between his two sons, John and Samuel Adam, in 1756. By 1759 the Adams' were among a small number of Quinnipiac families who had left New Haven and resettled among the Farmington Indians (Menta 1994:339-340). Samuel was born in 1734,

received an English education, and eventually married Hannah Squamp of Wangunk (Love 1899:336). He had several children, including four sons who died as soldiers in the Revolutionary War. In 1755 Samuel enlisted to fight the French under the command of Captain John Patterson of Farmington (Bates 1903:15). He helped organize the emigration to Oneida and was an early settler at Brotherton (Love 1899:336). He died there in 1808.

Hannah Squamp: This Wangunk was the "well educated" wife of Samuel Adams (Love 1899:336). Perhaps this is the "young squamp" referred to among twenty Wangunks who sold a forty-acre tract of land to Moses Bartlett in 1732 (Bayne 1884:496).

Samuel Ashbo: The Ashpo family is affiliated with the Mohegans. Samuel was born at Mohegan in 1718 (Love 1899:74-78). He attended school there and was converted at about the same time as Sampson Occom. He attended Rev. Wheelock's Indian Charity School for approximately six months and eventually went on to become a prominent Indian preacher. His name appears on a 1746 muster roll, enlisting him for a campaign against Canada (Bates 1911:138). He labored among the New England Indians throughout his career, but never removed to Brotherton. He died at Mohegan in 1795.

Hannah Mamanash: This Wangunk is thought to be the wife of Rev. Samuel Ashbo, and may be the "Mrs. Hannah Ashbow" who was buried at Mohegan in 1801 (Love 1899:76-78). She was among four female Wangunk land proprietors who petitioned the General Assembly in Oct. 1760 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141).

Ann Cohepins: This land proprietor subscribed a petition in May 1765, identifying her as a Wangunk (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146).

Gideon Commshot: The name "Commshot" probably represents a Wangunk family. An individual named Moses Comshot is among twenty Wangunks who sold a forty-acre tract of land to Moses Bartlett in 1732 (Bayne 1884:496).

James Cusk: The name "Cusk" is associated with the Tunxis of Farmington (Love 1899:341). In 1761 an Indian named Cusk deeded to his son James Cusk his house and land at Indian Neck. James lived there for a time before removing to Saratoga N.Y.

Thankfull Cushoy: This is a member of the Cushoy family. She was among four female Wangunk land proprietors who petitioned the General Assembly in Oct. 1760 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141).

Tike, or Mary Cushoy: This is the wife of Tom Cushoy, and perhaps a member of a prominent Wangunk family. She died prior to October 1771 while living on the Wangunk reservation.

Tom Cushoy: He is identified during the land claims process as the sachem of the Wangunks (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.232-233). He emerged into historical view in the early eighteenth century as a Wangunk land proprietor, and was generally known by the singular name Cushoy. His relatives would likely include

John Cushoy and Ben Cushoy who each purchased land rights at Wangunk during the 1740's. Tom Cushoy died prior to May 1765 while living on the Wangunk reservation. Indians bearing the Cushoy name appear among both the Wangunks and Mohegans in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Prudence Hubban: Along with four female Wangunk land proprietors, she petitioned the General Assembly in October 1760 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141). The name "Hubban/Hubbard/Hubband" is of English origin, and the surname of an eighteenth century Middletown family.

Susannah Pochomogue: She was among four female Wangunk land proprietors who petitioned the General Assembly in October 1760 (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.141).

Richard Ranney: He was a grandson of "Robine," one of the thirteen original proprietors of the Wangunk reservation as recorded in 1673 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214). Richard Ranney adopted Christian religion and English culture and moved to Newtown for some time. In 1758 the General Assembly granted him a ten-acre tract to cultivate within the dissolving reservation territory. The name "Ranney" is of English origin, and the surname of an eighteenth century Middletown family.

As a member of the Robin family, his relatives likely included Charles Robin, Isaac Robin, John Robin, Tom Robin, David Robin, and Samuel Robin. Charles Robin participated in a Wangunk land sale in 1732 (Bayne 1884:496). Isaac Robin sold land at

Wangunk in 1743 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:548), served in the French and Indian War in 1755 (Bates 1903:23), and died during a subsequent tour of duty in 1760 (Bates 1905:197). John Robin participated in a Wangunk land sale in 1732 (Bayne 1884:496) and served in the French and Indian War in 1756 (Bates 1903:112) and 1757 (Bates 1903:187). Tom Robin sold his land rights at Wangunk and resided at Hockanum as of 1741 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.10:546). David Robin lived in Farmington and expressed interest in the Brotherton Movement, but died in 1773 (Love 1899:358).

Samuel Robin: This member of the Robin family served in the French and Indian War in 1759 (Bates 1905:120) and 1761 (Bates 1905:244). Samuel Robin had a daughter named Ann who married Aaron Occum, a son of the Mohegan preacher Rev. Sampson Occum (Love 1899:254). Aaron died at Mohegan in the winter of 1771, leaving a son Aaron.

Moll, Wife of Sam: Moll is the wife of Samuel Robin. Her original community affiliation is not apparent.

Moses Sanchuse: The Sanchuse name is associated with the Wangunks. Peter Sanchuse, a probable relative of Moses, was born of a Wangunk family in 1693 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.1:214), owned land at Indian Hill, and died by 1731 (*Middletown Land Records*, Vol.22:24). Perhaps the Indian who carried the same name was his son. In 1755 Peter Sanchuse enlisted to fight the French under the command of Captain John Patterson of Farmington (Bates 1903:15) and helped organize the emigration to Oneida.

David Towsey: David and Sarah Towsey were the products of early instruction at Farmington and became "influential Christian Indians" (Love 1899:363). David served repeatedly during the French and Indian war, and sold his land at Indian Neck in 1769.

David's name is listed next to Hatchet Towsey on a 1755 muster roll (Bates 1903:15), suggesting that the two were relatives. The name "Towsey/Tousey" is English, however, the author supposes that it was substituted in place of "Towsick", which is likely a Native name. This is evidenced by spelling variants of the name Hatchet Tousey/Towsick, which appears in Connecticut muster rolls of 1746, 1756, 1759, and 1761 (Bates 1914:136; Bates 1903:106; Bates 1905:130; Bates 1905:262).

Naorni Wobinham: The Wobinhams are identified as a Wangunk family in a 1765 petition (*Connecticut Archives, Indians*, 1st Ser., Vol.2, Doc.146).

James Wowowous: The name "Wowowous" is associated with the Tunxis (Love 1899:202). The youth of this family were educated in the Farmington school. In 1755 James Wowowous enlisted to fight the French under the command of Captain John Patterson of Farmington (Bates 1903:15). In May 1768 he petitioned the General Assembly on behalf of the Farmington Indians, attempting to defend reservation land from encroachment by Farmington residents (PRCC, Vol.13:54). In 1771 he was listed as "James Wowous of Farmington, now of Stockbridge" (Love 1899:366). He participated in the planning of the emigration to Oneida. In 1777 a document identifies James Wowous as a member of the Tunxis community, and a proprietor of Farmington

lands (PRCC, Vol.15:286). He died before 1778 when his wife, Rachel Wowous, sold their lands at Farmington (Love 1899:336). They had at least two children.

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